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The preachers.



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THE
PREACHERS

BY
A MONK



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"The cure of a bad theology is not another, but Common Sense."
EMERSON.

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CHAPTER I.

WALK up some sunny day to one of the gigantic granite pillars of the Brooklyn bridge; what a sight discloses itself to your eyes!

“Do you see those white columns of steam rising above the house tops,” said a gentleman to a young lady, “do you know what they are? Those are all elevators driven by steam power.”

Houses, factories, palaces, towers, factory-chimneys, wharves, ferry houses and storehouses on both sides spread out much farther than the eye can reach, while down underneath roll the cable cars across the bridge, packed with humanity. The river is being ploughed by hundreds of steam and sailing vessels, pulling and dragging heavy boats with loads of building material, fuel, lumber and general merchandise, while others are crowded with busy people hurrying in both directions as their duties and interests may command.

Three centuries ago a desert, only inhabited by wild beasts, water fowl, and a handful of hungry savages; to-day a new world's industrial, commercial and financial metropolis! Three centuries ago a few huts accommodated the red-skins; to-day its population outnumbers countries like Switzerland, Greece, or even Norway.

How did it spring up from nothing? Who created it? How did they create it? Who are they? What are they? Ask a preacher. He will tell you: "My brother, it is Christian civilization, the result of the Christian religion; it is Christian faith that has peopled, created, developed, enriched and made this great metropolis and this new country." This is the accepted, the general view of the question with hardly any contradiction.

With what a glorious halo we see surrounded the heads of our "pilgrim fathers," the passengers of the "Mayflower," the first immigrants at "Plymouth Rock"! What a solemn, mystic light encircles their memory; and what a reverential awe strikes the mind of the Puritan patriot when he draws his lineage and traces his ancestors to that immortal band of "Puritans"! In a thousand years hence, if the nation and Protestantism exists, they will become American Perseuses, Jasons, Theseuses, Agamemnons, Herculeses, Achilleses and Ulysseses, heroes and demi-gods.

History records the indescribable miseries, destitution and suffering, to which these "pilgrim fathers" exposed themselves. We read that even the governors of those bygone times had to satisfy themselves with corn for their meals, given in meager rations. Hundreds of the colonists perished in sheer destitution, other hundreds by fire and by the tomahawks of the ferocious inhabitants.

Who called them to America? What was their business here? Why expose themselves to such suf-

ferings and death? Could they not stay at home, cultivate their fields, continue their trades, professions and business in their native land? How could their fathers, grandfathers and ancestors bear their fate in their own native land for centuries? Grave reasons must have prevailed with them; for, the average man is not easily persuaded to give up his home, his country, relatives and all, and to emigrate into an unknown wilderness across the ocean in frail wooden vessels, amidst deadly perils, in order to land and starve subsequently on foreign shores.

“Religious persecution,” the preachers answer unanimously. True there was religious persecution in Europe during which homes were destroyed, people massacred, banished or tortured, still not all did emigrate, not all became “pilgrim fathers;” thousands and thousands sacrificed their lives and property in resistance instead of coming to America.

There is a physical law in nature governing movement toward the least resistance. Water flows down hill; roots of trees seek the softest soil and cavities in rocks; buds break open the bark at the tenderest spot; force accumulated in the spring of a watch sets the wheels in motion; an amount of gunpowder carries the ball with itself after explosion, seeking the least resistance in the act of escaping. This important physical law is applicable also in metaphysics to illustrate those psychological phenomena which govern small and great events in the history of the human race. To

use the next best example let us consider, for a second only, these admired "pilgrim fathers." Now, the law is: "Movement tends towards the least resistance." While in Europe, the so-called "pilgrim fathers" had to face the cruel alternative either to submit to what was considered in their country the legitimate authority, and not to build a new theology of their own, or to suffer the penalty their own acts dictated against rebels and heretics. If they could find a door to escape this alternative, so much the better for themselves. The law was one resistance, their theological obstinacy the other resistance, while the open door, the escape—"pilgrimage" to America—was the "least resistance," or even an encouragement to self-assertion, independence and riches.

There is nothing exempt from this law. The whole universe; existence, life, mankind, society, religion, morality, poverty, vice, death are but issues and consequences of this stern law. All that happens or ever happened or will happen hereafter are but inevitable consequences of this and similar physical, chemical and mechanical laws, no matter how hidden, how latent or how wonderful they may appear.

Who discovered America? One who did not believe in: "And God said: Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters." One who did not believe in: "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth. . . . that the wicked might be shaken out of it?" One who did not believe in: "Which shaketh the earth out of her place, and the

pillars thereof tremble." One who did not believe in: "It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers."

Who created the new astronomy, by which Columbus felt encouraged to start out in search for India? One who did not believe in: "And God made the stars also. And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth." One who did not believe in: "Which commandeth the sun, etc., etc."

Who were those who immigrated into the wilderness of America rather than abandon their own religious views? Who were those who rather underwent death and all sufferings than to submit to the Old Church? Who were Luther, Calvin, Melancthon, Zwingli, Iluss, Wycliffe, Savonarola, Knox and the rest? They were those who did not believe in: "And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the Church: but if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican."

Who own magnificent dwellings, steamships, railroads, factories? Those who do not believe in: "Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."

Who give work to those thousands who swarm

Broadway, the avenues, streets, trains and boats? Who people those gigantic buildings, called "Equitable," "Stock," "Produce," and "Cotton Exchange"? Those who do not heed, for they do not believe in: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth. . . ! . . . But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven."

Why do those hundreds of thousands rush through the streets, bridge, boats, cars, elevated trains, cellars and tops of houses, fields, mountains, seas, the ice fields of the Arctic regions, the deserts of Africa, the womb of the earth, dynamite factories, blast furnaces, in all imaginable dangers of health and life? Why do men and women rob, steal, deceive, counterfeit, murder, prostitute themselves? Why do they, and who are those who fell trees, cut stone, cart earth, build these hundreds of thousands of structures? Those are the poor, who try to earn a living honestly if they can, dishonestly if they cannot. Those are they who do not believe in: "Therefore take no thought, saying, what shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?"

Who found savings-banks, life, fire, accident insurance societies, and who support them? Those who do not heed, because they do not believe in: "Take therefore no thought for the morrow; for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

Who discovered, peopled, built up, enriched and

brought America to her present flourishing condition? Is it "Christian faith," "Christian civilization," or even "Christianity"? No, it is and it was unbelief, it was disbelief in the Bible, disbelief in the doctrines of Christianity. It was and it is Infidelity, only masked hypocritically in the tattered garb of advancing, improving, "reforming" Christianity.

The tendency, the direction, the aim toward which the whole human race strides, is improvement, freedom, intellectual growth, material wealth and tangible happiness. This is what all we mortals are after. If we acknowledge this, it is tantamount to saying that we feel the lack of improvements, of freedom, of a safe home; that we are not grown to perfection, intellectually; that we are not wealthy materially, but poor; and above all, we are not happy. If we lack all this, then, we are in an unsatisfactory condition; we are oppressed, tyrannized, we are homeless, as most of us are; we are ignorant, as by far the greatest number of us actually are; we are poor, as but about four out of each one thousand are wealthy; we are unhappy, as but very few in the Christian world are happy. Therefore, the improvement must proceed from the unsatisfactory condition towards the good one; from oppression and tyranny to freedom; from destitute homelessness towards well-regulated, comfortable homes; from dark ignorance and superstition towards the light of mental culture; from poverty, pauperism and beggary

towards material wealth; from sufferings, cares, worriment, anxiety, towards individual happiness.

Is it religion in general and Christianity in particular which invites, solicits and attracts us towards the above mentioned improvements? Is it religion that compels, calls or invites a 'longshoreman to seek work around the docks? Is it religion that invites brick-layers to mount the scaffold and expose themselves to the burning July sun? Is it religion that invites capitalists to build railroads, tunnels, bridges, steamships, telegraph lines? Is it religion that calls into existence stock-exchanges, planing-mills, farms, plantations, cigar-factories, life and accident-insurance companies, stone-quarries, powder-mills, coal-mines and all other means and ways of earning? Can you talk religion in the pit of the exchange? Can you talk religion to a bank-teller, pleading lawyer, attending physician, busy merchant, wind-beaten sailor, sweating iron-smelters, dusty millwrights, a thoughtful chemist? To whom can you talk religion? To nobody, except children and old women. Mental and material improvement on one hand, and religion on the other, are two altogether opposite and inimical, incompatible things; just as much as wisdom and foolishness, learning and ignorance, honesty and dishonesty, wealth and pauperism. Is it therefore Christian religion, Christian civilization that built up this or any country in the world? Can any sort of civilization be honestly called *religious*, not to say *Christian*? Yes, in one way; something

as if we say that learning comes from ignorance, home from homelessness, wealth from poverty ; in the same way civilization emanates from religion. But properly speaking the truth is this: There is wisdom, in spite of foolishness ; there are homes, in spite of homelessness ; there is learning, in spite of ignorance and superstition ; there is wealth, in spite of poverty ; and there is civilization, in spite of religions at large, and Christianity in particular.

Civilization is the result of the physical law, that movement (or here, development) tends toward the least resistance. The resistances and pressures around us are starvation, homelessness, exposure, disease and death. When man is surrounded by pressures of destitution, then ignorance and religion are certainly the least resistances, so he will break through them, and in spite of ignorance and superstition, or better still, of religion, he will cover his body, build a roof over his head, will marry, found a family, will care and "take thought of the morrow," will "lay up treasures," will become irreligious, learned, wealthy and happy in *spite* of religion.

"*Vir fanaticus*," "a fanatic !"

Well, in classical times "*vir fanaticus*" meant something akin to "a gentleman of high moral reputation." *Fanum* in Latin means a temple or church (Engl. fane), *fanaticus* a church-going man, a man much devoted to his church. Times changed ;

churchism became an opprobrium, and "fanatic" an opprobrious epithet, much the same as "deacon," "preacher," are becoming ludicrous and covert terms. In the same degree as reason grows, childishness and foolishness appear ridiculous. If we were shown our games, sayings, beliefs of early childhood, or shown our little knee-breeches, at best we would smile, perhaps with a tint of blush. If we fumble among our old, yellowish bundles of papers and letters, and happen to strike upon one written in our tender age, and peruse it after years of mental development, we smile over our naïveté and inexperience. For inexperience, childishness, ignorance, belief are immaturities; when matured, they become respectively experience, judiciousness, learning and knowledge.

Wherever we look, whatever we take under consideration, growth, progress, evolution are at work. Out of a hardly visible seed grows a tender plant, the tender plant progresses in growth and develops into a robust tree. From an embryo develops a foetus, from this an infant, the infant grows till it becomes a child, a child becomes a youth, the youth a young man, finally a man ripens in age, experience and learning till he becomes an old man, who after leaving his seed, his children behind, decays gradually, and death dissolves the matter he was composed of. So are all human institutions and works, so is the universe itself. From imperfect beginning progress is made toward perfection, from immaturity toward ripeness.

Religion teaches us just the reverse. It seeks to persuade us that in the beginning all was perfect. The first man was an image of God; he was immortal; he was omniscient, giving names to "all" animals; he knew "all" animals; he was a friend of God, yet did not know the difference between the "good and evil;" and he was forbidden to taste the fruit of the "tree of knowledge," whereas he ought to have eaten of it to saturation. It teaches that there was a garden; that the earth gave its fruits spontaneously, without labor. Suppose it had been so, what would be the result? No evolution were possible. No children would be born, nor animals. No plants could grow from seed. Men could not learn, could not and would not work, nor were they capable of improvement. But there came the "sin," and sin changed all, transformed the whole creation. Man became subject to decay, to death; animals lost their speech; the earth became obstinate, would only bear fruit if man cultivated it for his own punishment; agriculture was made "God's punishment" for sin, etc. Had this been the case in reality, for progress we should have had retrogression. But all this is against experience, against truth, therefore untrue.

Can religion teach untruth?

What is religion?

Religion is a summary of beliefs.

What is belief?

Belief is credence given to assertions, of which we

have no other information. This is what we term "subjective religion." Religion in itself considered is called "objective religion." What is objective religion?

Objective religion is a popular philosophy to explain natural phenomena, popular ethics, and to teach morality to the ignorant.

Whence is religion? Religion is from belief. Whence is belief? From lack of positive information; in a word, from ignorance. Belief is supposition, knowledge is truth. Knowledge is sunshine whereby we see things as they are; belief is groping in the dark. Religion is a summary of beliefs, suppositions and guessings. A summary of positive informations, positive knowledge and light, is *science*.

Both religion and science spring from the same source, from ignorance; but while religion, formed upon prejudice, guess and supposition, was at once systematized, consolidated, and stereotyped for all the past, present and future, experience grew according to natural laws, like a plant, an animal or an infant, and unveiled things before the eyes of men. Men gathered experimental or empirical information, acquired knowledge of things, and this knowledge enabled them to unveil and discover truth which learned men classified and systematized. Thus they created science. Thus a decrepit, once precocious religion, met her orphan deserted brother, science, now a giant, and found in him a formidable enemy; as a nurse, instructing children, would find in a learned pro-

fessor of a university. Priests, preachers, temperance-women preach religion; chemists, physicists, geologists, astronomers and all other experts teach science.

Both religion and science have the same object in view, namely, to teach man how to explain natural phenomena, and by establishing principles of morality, to make him better and happier. Why, then, is there antagonism between the two? Religionists claim that there is no antagonism between science and religion, but experience teaches differently. There is antagonism between religion and science; and that antagonism is precisely like the one that might be between an old woman and Professor Virchow of Berlin. The old woman will kneel down at the bedside of a sick person, a book in hand, will rattle down words, will read: "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, . . . and the prayer of faith shall save the sick." Professor Virchow will touch the pulse of the sick, ask a few questions, write a few lines on a slip of paper, and will order some drugs if there is reasonable hope of recovery; otherwise he will tell the attendants to send for the undertaker. If, in consequence of droughts, the land and fields are barren, the old woman or the preacher will again take the book and recite: "Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years

and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruits." Geologists in such cases project artesian wells, canals and cisterns; and if there be too much rain, drainage has been found out as a remedy.

Credulity is the nurse of religion, as doubt is the nurse of science; where doubt begins credulity ceases, and where knowledge begins, belief ceases. The point of departure is ignorance, the goal is science. As science excludes belief, it necessarily involves unbelief, which culminates in atheism. Therefore the gradation is this: Man in the condition of savagery takes notice of natural phenomena, whereby fear is engendered in his uncultured mind, and fear creates angry gods with thunderbolts in their grasp; this produces worship and superstition; the latter degenerates into fanaticism, rage and craze, causing wars and persecution, while man becomes a barbarian. In this state there is no reasoning, but brutal tyranny and authority. Doubt creeps in stealthily, heresies begin and creep along with fanaticism, hidden under hypocrisy. Doubt increases, so does hypocrisy; man begins to see and hear, but vaguely, while the race is improving into a half-civilized condition. Man dares undertake research, investigation, shielded all along by hypocrisy, that is, professing dogmas, but doubting the same by practice. When doubts carve out conviction in the doubter's heart, and can reasonably be concluded, or it is found out by experience that the

doubters are many, sects arise, which, if strong, will separate from the maternal body; if weak and premature, they are trampled down. Improvements continue, experience and learning grow, doubt acquires strength, hypocrisy widens, "error" and "heresy" become an undeniable power, and cannot be ignored; tolerance gets acknowledgement and forbearance. Doubt, knowledge and science begin to be regarded as no evil, and often are respected, for fanaticism has retreated to dark corners; doubt and hypocrisy rule supreme, reason insists on its right to explain miracles, mysteries and absurdities, and rationalism springs up. Civilization creates wonders of inventions; fanaticism and orthodoxy become obsolete, hypocrisy walks on its toes, rationalism rules, infidelity and unbelief grow out of doubt, and smile at their eggshells, the churches become theaters, preachers and dogmas are derided, atheism is now the new goal, toward which all tends. Reason, as it appears in our age, demands its right to supersede belief and religion, the churches are deserted, ministers give in, and reason leads to the final goal, *agnostic mental culture*.

Let us see if it is so!

Who are the agnostics? Agnostics are those who do not admit the existence of God. Who are they? They are the leading thinkers and scientists of all ages, like Darwin, Herbert Spencer, Hæckel, Büchner, Schopenhauer, Von Hartmann, Diderot, almost all great philosophers of antiquity up to Gautama Buddha. Whence are atheists recruited? From agnostics and

infidels. Who are they? They are also learned men of the very first rank. Agnostics are those who "do not admit that God and a spiritual world exist." Infidels are those who do *not believe* that Jesus is or was God. Whence are they? They are recruited from among all Christian sects, not counting Jews, Mohammedans and all other non-Christians. But by far the greatest number of infidels and agnostics are born in Protestant denominations, therefore, in the first place, they are unbelievers in Protestantism. Who are the Protestants? Protestants are a flood of unbelievers in each other. The first are the Unitarians, composing the most liberal sect. They do not believe in Universalism, Universalists do not believe in Congregationalism, Congregationalists do not believe in Presbyterianism, Presbyterians do not believe in Episcopalianism. . And so it goes in about 185 sects. In fact, they are like a school of children who have had a dispute over some doll's dress, and now do not "want to play together." But they are "Christians," all united against the Catholics, the mother church. They do not believe in each other, and they do not believe in the Catholic mother church. Who are the Catholics? The Catholics are the continuation of primitive Latin Christianity, as the Russo-Greek church is the continuation of primitive Greek Christianity; together they are the continuation of the primitive Christianity. What is Christianity? Christianity is unbelief in orthodox and Mosaic Judaism; a compound of

reformed Judaism, Roman paganism, Greek sophistry and Hindoo pessimism. What is reformed Judaism? The negation and unbelief in ritual and ceremonial Mosaism, and the acceptance of Messianism. What is Mosaic Judaism? It is unbelief in Egyptian theology, and unbelief in polytheism. What is polytheism? Polytheism is belief in natural phenomena as supernatural powers and deities. Whence does it come? It comes from natural ignorance and fear of the elements.

Here you have the two ends: Atheism—polytheism; no God—many Gods; science—ignorance.

Will Christianity also lead to, and end in, atheism? Undoubtedly it will, and more surely than either Judaism or Mohammedanism, for the reason that Christian nations are more civilized, more developed than Jews and Moslems, and their religion contains more unbelievable matter than Judaism or Islamism, and consequently Christianity produces incomparably more doubters and hypocrites than either or both of the former.

The decomposition of Christianity is only a matter of time. America and France are avowedly the two most advanced nations. The first is largely composed of agnostics infidels and a hundredfold dilacerated Protestants, who like to call the United States a "Protestant country." The second is, with scarcely any exception a Catholic country. Which ever of these two, or any other country will advance most rapidly, and develop to the high-

est degree of intellectual refinement and culture, will also be the first to bury its respective Protestant or Catholic Christianity. But, if we follow the footprints of intellectual evolution as seen heretofore, it is safe to foretell that our grandchildren will bury American Protestantism first. Next will follow English Protestantism, French Catholicism, Greek Catholicism, German Protestantism, German Catholicism. The rest may survive a couple of centuries more, on account of the too deep ignorance of Italy, Spain, Russia, Austro-Hungary and other minor states.

Christians smile at this statement of ours as the cardinals might have smiled in the middle of the XVth century, and they appeal to the divine "origin of Christianity and its perpetual duration until the end of the world." All talk of "divine" is unbecoming in our age, and we leave it to priests and preachers; we only wish to throw a glance upon its origin, development and disruption.

It is a remarkable trait of the early Christian bigots, that they destroyed all written records of the true history of their origin, so full of deceits, frauds and impositions. There is hardly anything else left but what they piously call "gospels" and "epistles." Yet there remain fragments of so-called "apocrypha," histories of a few Greek priests and whatever we can glean from quotations and conclude from the "canonical" writings. We know that there were more than fifty "gospels," a "Letter of

Jesus," a "Letter of Mary," and several other fictitious documents and pious frauds. It only shows that the early church and its founders acted too zealously with the intention of deceiving the credulous. Could a trustworthy man say or write in an historical document, the following? "And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written." Voltaire very aptly remarks that, indeed, not the world, but a very small table could contain them all.

Without regard to the impostures I advance my firm conviction that Rabbi Yeshúa (Jesus) never intended to start a new religion, nor did he ever found one. He had no more to do with Christianity than Hannibal or the inhabitants of New Guinea. The gospels are not his writings, his speeches reported therein are not his words; the opinions advanced there are not his opinions. This is plainly shown by the gospels themselves. These books were not written by Jews, but by Greeks who knew nothing about Jesus and the Jews. Rabbi Yeshúa certainly never said: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his *cross*, and follow me!" *Cross* had no such meaning among Jews, nor any other meaning in his days than *gallows*; this significance of the cross is of very late origin among Christians, not earlier than the catacombs.

Rabbi Yeshúa certainly can never have said:

“And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world,” for there was no “gospel” written in his days nor even in his century.

If any man should form an opinion of the character of Rabbi Yeshúa from the so called “gospels” he would do a great injustice to him. The ignorant and unscrupulous gospel-mongers attribute to him such words and deeds as would rather libel than deify him. However, it is not my purpose to discuss his life and character in this book. I will satisfy myself with the candid statement that Rabbi Yeshúa had no hand in making up Christianity. Rabbi Yeshúa never existed as a prominent historical person, and if he existed at all, he was a socially obscure person, an unpretentious Essenian monk at the best.

The gospels are a Greek collection of anecdotes of the wonders and sayings of various Jewish rabbis, all heaped and piled up around one Rabbi Yeshúa in precisely the same manner as we can see in the lives of the rabbis Yo-hhánan, Akiva, Mek-ir and others, so well known to Jews and Hebrew scholars. Rabbi Yo-hhánan lived in the times in which the gospels locate Jesus, and was engaged in collecting traditions from which he compiled the *Mishna* (the “secondary law” of the Jews). Any Jew who happens to read our gospels must smile at our inconceivable credulity. They will at once know that these gospels are but fragments of Jewish traditions like the *Mishna*, the *G'môro*, various *Halahhas*, *Haggadas*,

Midrashim, Massorah and the Cabbala. Not one of the gospel doctrines is new or "revealed;" every one can be found and traced in the main collection of the Jewish traditions; so can every miracle attributed to Yeshúa. Whatever new principles are announced or expressed in the gospels (*i. e.* new to Jews) are misunderstood Greek sophistry and a faint tinge of Hindoo hearsay. The first three gospels belong to one source, the fourth to another. All are built upon Mishnaic traditions, but the former three are written in the spirit of a Hebraizing Greek, while the fourth is the work of a bigoted Greek who had read books, and who may even have had companionship with learned Greek scholars. This fourth gospel is responsible for the doctrine of the Trinity and many other absurdities.

The author of the Jewish reformation, called Christianity; was Shaw ool, later, to please the Greeks, called Paul, the rejected lover of Rabbi Gamaliel's daughter, who sought revenge against the Jews by joining the already lingering sect of the reformers or seceders. However, he did not preach nor assert in a single word that Rabbi Yeshúa was a god, nor anything like it; he only insisted that Yeshúa was the Messiah, and, as no Jew in Palestine would listen to him and his harangues, he turned to the Greek and Latin Jews, who knew nothing of what was going on in Palestine, or whether a Rabbi Yeshúa really existed and wrought miracles or not. Nor did Paul ever intend to start a new religion, later

to be called "Christianity;" he only wished to stir the outside Jews to tantalize the Jews of Palestine, to exert a pressure upon them to stand up and unite in the belief of the arrival of the Messiah, which means the end of the world. Whether he honestly believed in the speedy arrival of the final catastrophe, whether he honestly believed in the soon-to-return Messiah, we know not; but that he was an enthusiast, a fanatic and of a desperate character, we have ample proofs. In his mind the world was soon to be destroyed by fire and the doomsday was at the threshold. All his teachings were clustered around this one idea, and the three gospels were also written under this influence. No one thought that the world would last for fifty years; and even John's gospel is not free from this fanatical supposition. "And then shall the end come." This end of the world was to come before that generation died out. "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled." Many of those who lived in those days would not even die before the Messiah (Rabbi Yeshúa, or Jesus) would reappear on earth, hold the last judgment, and would guide the pious into his kingdom, the heavens. "Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom." It is entirely in the spirit of Paul, as if dictated by him: "But this I say, brethren, the time is short:" How soon Paul believed the world would come to its

end, the dead would rise and go together with those who remained in life, to meet the Messiah, he tells us in these words: "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent (Vulg. *preveniemus*, precede) them which are asleep (dead). For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

Who will wonder that the Roman governor Porcius Festus, a man of common sense, hearing the harangues of this bald-headed, cross-eyed, hunch-back, and bow-legged little Jew took him for a maniac, addressing him: "Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad;" or in the language of the Vulgate, "Paul, you talk like a fool; excessive book-worming turns you insane." But by "learning," we must not suppose as if he had been regarded a learned man; his learning consisted of Jewish traditions, laws, writings and interpretation, with, possibly, some idea of Greek authors and philosophers. He was requested by the Jews to furnish evidence of his mission by working miracles; as he could not, they laughed at him. The Greeks demanded philosophical arguments and proofs; he had none to give; so they declared his doctrine a

foolishness. Paul is complaining of it himself: "For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom. But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks, foolishness." As he could furnish neither miracles, wisdom, nor argument, the cunning Jew sought and found refuge in the other extreme: denouncing wisdom, praising ignorance, simpleness, poverty, abjectness and all that is low and unworthy; and thus he carried his point. In his epistles as well as in the gospels a bitter war is declared against nobleness, wealth and learning in favor of lowliness, poverty and ignorance. And the novelty of this daring argument carried away the masses of the Greek and Latin populace in the larger towns and cities.

So the new sect was established. Fifty years elapsed, one hundred years passed; Paul died, all the "apostles" died, still the sun continued to rise and set, the world continued to exist, and the Messiah (Rabbi Yeshúa) failed to appear; yet the sect grew instead of disbanding after such positive disappointments. This rabble soon spread and had the unparalleled impudence to attack the religion of Rome and seek to dethrone Jupiter from the Capitol and put in their god, Rabbi Yeshúa. A few Greek scholars also found their way among them, who introduced the doctrine of the Trinity. As they became boisterous, Rome, who never drew her sword for or

tence, felt compelled to restrain the effrontery of the new sect, whereupon they gathered in subterranean cavities ; crypts or catacombs, gradually developing into a secret organization, with their pass-words and secret signs to make themselves known by day or night. What their morality was, can be seen and understood from the epistles of Paul. He could not keep them honest and respectable even for a short time, though threatening them with eternal damnation and the possible arrival of the "Lord" any minute. The masses continued to be idlers, to come to the *agape* or brotherly love-feast (communion) hungry, in order to eat themselves full, while many came drunk, or got intoxicated there by the "blood of the Messiah." Others practiced adultery, fornication, and even incest. Still others denounced Paul as an embezzler, discredited and disobeyed him, questioned his honesty, questioned his jurisdiction and even questioned his doctrines. Later on some arose and denied that Rabbi Yeshúa was a god. Some now began to reason and say: "If Rabbi Yeshúa was a god, how could he be a man? Did he have two persons?" Others asked: "Did he have a divine and a human nature?" Disputes and quarrels arose, and in such cases they all agreed to refer the question to the bishop of the capital as having the most populous congregation ; and thus the bishop of the capital (Rome) began to be regarded the most dignified. This was the seed of Papacy. The new sect soon found followers in the army and navy.

It happened that this army obtained a great victory, which, in these declining days of Rome, was unusual, and was attributed to a miracle. Eusebius, and a few shameless followers of Constantinus the Great, a murderer and fratricide, can tell wonderful stories about that victory and the "labarum," the cross in the heavens with the inscription *Ἐν τούτῳ νικά, i. e. In Hoc Signo Vincas* (By this sign thou wilt conquer.) This victory of the Christian legions was worth to them the city of Rome, the Papacy, freedom, supremacy over the old religion, churches, chapels, altars, and tons of gold and silver, if one would believe Eusebius. The emperor put in his sword, authority and wealth, on the side of the Christians, who by this time were divided into many sects, and he himself ordered a general conference of all Christian bishops at Nikea in the year 325 or 328, over which he presided himself although a Pagan. Eusebius claims that Constantine took the baptism on his dying bed. This is just as incredible as the rest of his stories; why not at or before the opening of the council?

Let us leave now the party struggles and dogmatical quarrels lasting for centuries, and turn our eyes to another very dark point, scarcely ever touched upon by critics and historians; I mean the background of the Crusades and Crusaders.

The first, unsuccessful expedition swept out at least one hundred thousand male enthusiasts from among the Christian nations of Europe. Monas-

teries, and hermitages buried at least two hundred thousand male individuals. The celibacy of the clergy and the celibacy of the knights put out of the way at least another one hundred thousand male individuals. The second, third and fourth expeditions must have swept out of existence at least two millions of male human beings and crippled as many. The females always outnumbered the males, so that at that period at the lowest calculation there were more than 5,000,000 women in Europe without husbands.

Love-affairs were scarce, therefore love was an event. All young men followed or joined the military orders and went east, either not marrying (like the members of the orders) or leaving their wives at home. Wandering, adventurous knights were strolling about, troubadours were loitering and hanging around castles and forts, clowns delighted and entertained the ladies. In Spain and southern France love-tribunals sprung up among ladies, for, as we stated, lovers and love-affairs became a rarity, and those that were to be had were well worth quarrels to be settled by "courts of love." Sentimentalism grew to be only a little less than insanity. Wild passion and spurious children were the order of the day.

On the other hand, the seven expeditions of the Crusaders, lasting for about two hundred years, removed about 5,000,000 male individuals from their homes, away from their family ties; wandering

through foreign countries, they soiled themselves with unimaginable sexual impurities, debauchery and excesses wherever they appeared. From Great Britain to Syria the world was an ocean of prostitution, wild love, sexual excess, and limitless disorder. Mothers, wives, sisters, daughters and widows were left at home unprotected; cripples, beggars, thieves, murderers peopled towns and cities; the fields, farms, gardens, workshops were deserted; poverty, prostitution, theft, murder, rapes, assaults, incendiarism ran riot from one end of Europe to the other. Wild beasts visited villages and towns, famine broke out, provisions could not be bought for money. More than one million strong arm-bearing men left with each new expedition, and not a single man came back from the first, only a few cripples from the next; and so it went on for 200 years.

The venereal excesses and impurities of the Crusaders brought calamity and devastation to Europe, such as mankind never saw before nor after; and the nations of Europe were running the risk of being altogether exterminated. Christian writers are loath to mention the horrors brought about by this awful fanaticism, yet, facts are facts, and medical authorities would not be far wrong to call this age the age of syphilis. Ignorance and superstition were the remedies; prayers, fasts, pilgrimages were instituted, for there was no medical science of any merit in that age. Fearful diseases spread without any resistance, and culminated in the so-

called "Black Death," which in the middle of the XIVth century (1350-51) swept through all Europe. People dropped dead in the streets with black vomit and black spots on the face. The corpses of men, women and children, were simply piled up in the streets like flour-bags, crosswise row above row, till long ditches could be dug and the thousands buried. The air was infected to such a degree that people carried odoriferous herbs in their hands to smell every instant, so unbearable was the stench! More than 50,000,000 people perished in two years, and fully 100,000,000 in all as a consequence of Christian fanaticism!

No human pen can adequately describe the misery, poverty, immorality and degradation that followed the frightful plague. Europe was thrown back by at least three hundred years.

The priesthood lived in open concubinage, paying annual taxes to their respective bishops for license to keep a female in the house. Monks and nuns visited each other, spending days and nights in orgies. Bishops and abbots acted as generals in the armies; their own dignities and positions were for sale, purchased in most cases by dukes, counts and other rich people not priests, and they lived in shameless drunkenness and venereal orgies. Drunken mobs were wandering through the streets dressed in ecclesiastical vestments, and during the "bacchanalia," the last three days preceding Lent, entered the churches where the dance commenced,

opened usually by the parish priest with an elderly woman. An ass was dressed and ornamented with the insignia of a bishop and was led up to the high altar with incense and regular mass ceremony. Then a man sat on the ass, dressed in a long robe in imitation of Jesus, and drove through the streets. In Lent they organized a small company,—Jesus, Maria, St. Joseph, the high priest, Pilate, and the twelve apostles, studied the gospels committing them to memory and gave theatrical performances of the “Passion and Crucifixion” called the *Passion Play*.

Rome had another fanatical institution, established at that time, called the “Inquisition” and directed against infidels, mainly those who were in sympathy with the Moors and Jews in Spain. Contact with the Mohammedans in the East, and those in Spain influenced Christian society a great deal, but to the detriment of religion. The Moors in Spain especially excelled in science and arts. The Jews considered them as their kindred and natural allies and protectors. Hence they gathered around them, studied and taught in their institutions, and soon there sprang up a specific infidel learning in Spain. Among Jews the greatest rabbis they ever had were born and acquired learning under the protection of the Moors. The works of Aristotle, lost by the Christians, were early translated into Arabic; the Jews translated them into Hebrew, and thus they were saved from total loss. Great schools flourished under Moorish and Jewish doctors, and astronomy, geometry and medicine,

with a new science, called *alchemy* or chemistry, and the purely Arabic invention "algebra" were cultivated. The Christians had no figures, except Roman capital letters, to express number and quantity; thus, ten was marked X; one, I; etc. The Moors introduced the figures we now use: 1, 2, 3, 4, etc. They also invented a new style in building, the Moorish or Saracenic, in which all synagogues are built, and also a special style in decorative art, called the *Arabesque*. Moorish learning soon gained a great expansion among Christians, who secretly studied chemistry, mathematics, astronomy, physics and algebra; and the Inquisition had plenty to do in checking Christians from renegading. We know of many Christians who embraced Mohammedanism and Judaism; in one or two instances Dominican monks themselves turned to Judaism after studying the works of Jewish rabbis. And these Dominicans were from the order of the Inquisitors! In one instance twelve Dominican monks left the Christian religion and became infidel Jews. There were thousands and thousands of Christians who, though not circumcised, were living in the Jewish manner, frequenting synagogues, and reciting Jewish prayers. These were called the "Hebraizantes." Rome was enraged; threw thousands of them into prison, others were tortured, and countless burnt on the scaffold. This is called the "Jewish persecution;" but in fact they were no real Jews, but converts, renegade Christians.

About the time when the Moors were expelled from Spain America was discovered. This great event was a crushing blow upon Christian fanaticism, destroying faith in the authority of the Bible and that of the holy fathers, who denied the existence of antipodes. Printing was invented, whereupon a flood of books appeared, ideas became popularized, religious controversies printed and read. Doubters in religion began to be known and persecuted, but their ideas spread. Alchemists, mathematicians and astronomers were at work steadily but secretly, for scientists were persecuted as sorcerers; they burned Cecco d'Ascoli at the stake for maintaining the impious doctrine of the existence of antipodes. Among the great doubters we find eminent scholars, but few dared face the danger that accompanied honest sincerity, like Abelard, who doubted the Trinity; but there were numerous others, an entire latent sect denying the divinity of Rabbi Yeshúa, while Savonarola was burnt alive for resisting papal authority.

The power of Rome was supreme. No one dared question the pope's authority. But this very circumstance created as many enemies to Papacy as they were honest and sincere men in Europe who cared for freedom or had sufficient self-esteem. The popes lived with their courts in the greatest pomp and splendor that money and art could create. All countries were tributaries, tax payers; cardinals and bishops throughout the world had to pay Rome one year's income, and send moneys for various dispensations

dignities and degrees conferred, in one word, Rome could bathe in gold and silver extorted from all nations under the sun. The bishops of Europe in their turn were large land-owners, possessors of castles, forts; they were political dignitaries; dukes, princes, counts, electors having their own courts, armies, princely revenues; living in profligacy and dissoluteness, maintaining harems and hundreds of parasitic courtiers, suppressing the least stir among their subjects with cold bloodshed and heartless tyranny.

The orders in the monasteries were also large land-owners, except the mendicant orders, and had the same feudal rights as the nobles and barons. The abbots were also great dignitaries with a horde of monks at their feet to dispose at will. While the abbots and bishops continued the life of a *bon vivant* amidst wine, women and song, the lower clergy was subjected to the most heartless tyranny. The law of celibacy began to be enforced with implacable severity; those who resisted were degraded, expelled, tortured or walled in.

Dissatisfaction was universal in monasteries and nunneries as well as in the ranks of the secular clergy, not to speak of the serfs and poor working classes of the people. A man of our days could hardly credit the condition of the producers in Europe all through the centuries called "middle age." Work was considered unworthy for a man and a degradation for an individual. The working classes therefore were made up out of slaves, war

prisoners, and men who threw themselves into debts which they were unable to pay. There was no regular trained army, but in case of war all were soldiers who were able to furnish themselves with armament, provisions, clothes and bear all the expenses ; those who were not able, were classed into districts, or numbers, and as such, had to contribute so much to equip a certain number of mounted or foot soldiers. Those equipping themselves were the wealthy classes, born soldiers, nobles, "men;" the rest ignoble "peasants," "artisans" and "serfs." Priests belonged to the class of the "nobles," monks were nobles collectively, that is, the monastery was as much as a "*curia*," the estate of a noble landlord, and the abbots, provincials and priors were noblemen, enjoying the privileges of that class. The farmer owned no property, he was a "farmer," *i. e.* "a tenant," who only cultivated the land of the noble landlord, held it, earned his living by it, giving one tenth of the revenue to the landlord, another to the church, and bearing all expenses and taxes, whatever the authorities ordered to levy. He was not free to abandon the farm, to go and work for another ; He was sold as "*fundus intructus*" (a furnished farm), or farm implements. Moreover, not only were the farmers without real estate and personal freedom, but most of the landlords had also the "sword right," which meant that even the life of those peasants was in the landlords' hands: so that the latter was the master and judge

and as such, had the right and jurisdiction of capital punishment over his farmers or peasants. Another privilege, the most pleasing one of the ecclesiastical landlords, like bishops and abbots, was called the "right of the first night." This privilege meant that the bride of a young peasant was to spend the first night, after marriage ceremony, with the landlord, and the poor young man could come next day for his bride. It is not credible that this institution sprung from the head of honest, married men; there is no reasonable doubt but that it was an ecclesiastical, or more properly speaking, an hierarchical device.

The pope was the supreme authority on earth, the successor of St. Peter, the turn-key of heaven, the vicar of Jesus, the representative of God among men. By the *anathema* he could check heretics and dissensions; by the keys he controlled conscience, free speech and opinion. By the princely donations of kings and emperors, by the rich legacies of princes, princesses, knights and nobles, millions looked up to him as to their king, landlord and patron. By the idea of purgatory all were dependent on him who lost parents, wives, husbands, children or relatives by death, and enormous sums of money, foundations, presents were given and put under his disposal as that of an autocrat and supreme judge of the departed souls. Life was but peregrination, the body but a prison of the soul, and all was but a transitory state, and preparation for a future,

happy and eternal life of which the pope could dispose at will; spiritual power was the only power, spiritual authority the only authority, spiritual learning the only learning; philosophy was called the servant maid of theology, wealth was only vanity, and only good to secure salvation by founding churches, monasteries and convents, and paying for masses. Civil authorities were to be obeyed, to practice holy obedience and humility, but only so far as these authorities were, in their turn, obedient to the Holy See. In this respect the popes performed an act of far-reaching statesmanship, by the desire to unite, or rather re-establish the old Roman empire overthrown by the barbarians. They took the first opportunity they had. In Byzantium (Constantinople) lived the Emperor of the East but he had no power and his empire was confined to a small territory, the rest was already taken by the new conqueror, the Mohammedan Ottoman Turks, while the western Roman empire had been extinct since the middle of the fifth century. Charles, the king of the Franks, was Christian and a powerful conqueror, who undertook many bloody expeditions against the Moors, Saxons, and all other non-Christians, and after conquering, subduing, partly expelling them, remained the only king in the west. The pope put the crown of the western emperors upon his head in the year 800, creating the new, now "holy" Roman empire, which continued to exist till 1806, when Napoleon the Great abolished it entirely.

Thus the popes were actually the creators of the emperors, these were elected by kings and "electors," consequently the popes were patrons, fathers and kings of the kings and the emperors, and politically and morally the supreme power and authority on earth.

Rome was the centre of political, moral, religious and literary life. There was hardly any learning, literature, or art outside of Rome. Civilization in its every branch had to start out from Rome and Italy. Italy had by this time the greatest poets, greatest scholars, the greatest artists, that ever existed in Christendom, while France, Germany and England still slumbered in darkness. All the political and social institutions as well as religion and science were transplanted from Rome by missionaries and monks. Let us not forget this: southern plants transferred to northern soil! Imagine an orange or fig tree from sunny Italy transplanted to the shores of the Baltic sea or the banks of the Thames!

It is one thing to be a peasant and cultivate the soil of Italy, more than two thousand years under cultivation, where no swamps were to be drained, no rocks, forests, snow, ice and inclemency of the elements to be fought against; and another thing to be a peasant in Germany, Sweden or England, to fell forests, remove rocks, bridge over rivers, drain swamps, seek protection against frost, wind and storms. There is less enthusiasm, less inspiration for poetical and artistic genius. Nature there is a

severe step-mother. Every inch of land was to be conquered and subdued with hard and steady work. Solid, water, frost and wind-proof shelters were to be built. Half of the year was claimed by the stern winter, and only the other half was available for farming and agriculture. Chestnuts, grapes, figs and other light substances were no food for the stout northerner. His appetite was strong, his necessities and exigencies were numerous. Warm clothing, solid weapons, solid tools, solid shelter, solid food, solid work; numerous problems of how to utilize his field, how to fill up washouts, and dry riverbeds; how to level hills, how to dig wells, find fuel, etc., and a thousand other hard questions arose and exercised the brain of the northern husbandman. His meditation was about realities of the present life, while in the sunny south nature almost spontaneously solved these questions. The northern is silent, meditative, cold; while the southern is an enthusiast, noisy, talkative and hot. The south was full of miracles, prayers, monks and nuns; the northerner imitated them in his new zeal, but he never relished the miracles, the boisterous ceremonies, monastery, nunnery, celibacy. The southern spoke in allegories, in translated sense: he married his church, she embraced her celestial spouse; they ate the body and drank the blood of the "Saviour;" the northern preferred common-sense marriage, common-sense home, common-sense talk, common-sense bread, common-sense wine or beer, or whiskey, or brandy.

Any outside (non-Christian) philosopher could have seen at the end of the fourteenth century that these things could last no longer; Latin and German nations can not be governed together under one, either mere Latin or mere German, set of rules and principles, language and institutions. The natural law of evolution led and drove both races into two different directions.

CHAPTER II.

COMING events cast their shadow before.

Great events hinge on small matters.

Great events are caused by small events; small events are wielded by one man or few men; one man or few men bringing about events, have always some personal interest at the bottom of the affairs, and the French saying is perhaps generally true: "*Cherchez la femme!*"

Society and all its institutions throughout the civilized world rested on authority, founded upon the axiom "all power from above." The pope was the source of power on earth, he was the moderator of the conscience, while the emperor and other monarchs, by the will and grace of God, had the control of the political power. So far so good. There were, however, two gigantic, unnatural mistakes made, which, sooner or later had to punish their perpetrators, as all crimes against nature carry the germ of punishment within their own bosoms. One of the mistakes was the unnatural oppression by the political authorities, robber knights and robber nobles. People first began to bring into question the authority of the emperor. True or not true, legend or history, we cannot decide, nor does it matter, but we are told that the Hapsburg tyrants through their

governor Gestner, ordered a hat to be posted upon the highway in Switzerland, and all citizens were bidden to raise their hat upon passing that imperial hat, in profound salutation. It provoked honest, self-respecting men, and led them to conspiracy; this brought on revolution, which ended in the expulsion of the tyrant, and the establishment of a republic, where no monarch "by the grace of God" is acknowledged, and the foundation of which is altogether opposite to that of the Christian axiom "all power from above."

Moreover, as all nations were educated by Rome, converted by Rome, no language was known but the Latin; and the nations were for long centuries in strait-jacket as it were, impeded in free breathing and national development. Evidently it could not last forever. And we all know how sweet and dear it is to dictate laws, ignore natural rights, condemn the feelings of our subjects and cling to our unquestioned rights and govern others without responsibility. This was the delight of Rome, before whose cardinals and legates trembled the kings and potentates of the despised "barbarians." It proved, however, an unpardonable short-sightedness on the part of Rome. Still she could not help it. Religion brought it with itself. Could the nations rid themselves of the pope? They could not without religious doubt. Where could religious doubt begin and where could it end? Attack the primacy of the pope? Upon what proofs? Or should a whole nation rise as one

man against the emperor? There was no way out of it. Everything was religion wherever one would touch. All that there was of religion, its sources, documents and all were at Rome in pontifical power; how could nations or private individuals help themselves?

The Swiss insurrection ended victoriously and gave a new impulse all around for national feelings. The Germans, the English and all northerners began to come to national self-consciousness, that is, they began to feel that they were Germans, English, Hollanders, Swedes, etc., and not Italians. It was a natural process of the mind, fermenting secretly without smoke or flame.

The other great mistake was the celibacy of the clergy and the monastic institution. We are well aware that both celibacy and monachism are not only explicable from a Catholic stand-point, but almost a necessity, these institutions being the most powerful lever in the hands of the Papacy. An unmarried clergy, if it could exist in accordance with the heart's wishes, *i. e.*, if the unmarried state were not one of human nature, a mere business question, without the shadow of doubt would form the ideal army for the defence of the Papacy. And if monks could be moulded and formed by mere orders or by the painter's hand, it were the most formidable array of men in the world that would resist intellectual as well as physical combinations against the Holy See. But it is precisely here that nature's veto comes in against

such mechanical calculation upon celibate clergy and well-disciplined armies of monks.

Just imagine, for the sake of argument, half a million of choice men, selected out of the flower of all nations on earth to be educated, instructed, taught and practiced to think, to speak, to talk, to write always and invariably for the pope. They are better educated, better housed, better fed than all other people. They are selected from all nations; they represent all languages, all conditions of life. They have parents, brothers, sisters, relatives as natural allies everywhere. Most of them have large estates and domains giving livelihood to many, their natural allies. Who could be counted among their enemies? Nobody can compete with them in religious questions, for it is their profession, while other people have other pursuits in life. They have no country, they are no citizens; they care nothing for the political welfare of a country, as long as they are fed well. They have no wives, no children, no home-life, rent, fuel, clothing to think of, consequently they have absolutely no interest in life, but to work for the pope; to go where they are sent, say what they are bidden to, keep silent when not asked, and perform little home practices to kill time while not actually needed.

This is the ideal state of a monk as harnessed for papal purposes. Originally, however, monachism was an institution independent of the church; it has gradually developed to what it is to-day in the same

way as the church. We saw that Paul's heresy from Judaism was but a fanatical outburst of Messianic expectation and not meant for perpetuity, but only for a few years, till the Messiah should return from his journey to heaven; subsequent events, however, perpetuated the existence of the sect. So monachism at first was a retreat for old sinners, to do penance for their "sins" and trespasses; a retirement from the world into deserts, forests or caves, where, in solitude, the inveterate sinners meditated over death and eternity, in the most severe self-abnegation and self-torment until death. It was not an established order till the times of Benedict, and even then the hermits and monks were no theologians, no students nor priests, but old, worn out lay brothers, professing agriculture for a living. Even as late as the XIIth and XIIIth century men like St. Francis of Assisi, were no priests, although they preached around the country. Among the Franciséans the first priest was St. Anthony of Padua. St. Francis expressly instructs his monks not to study or learn letters. Monks therefore were only drawn in by the church and harnessed by the popes for the advancement of their own interests, and the aggrandizement of the Holy See; but subsequently they were taught, young people were urged to join, were ordained priests, and organized for aggressive combativeness and passive resistance. The kings and nobles provided for their physical wants, and the pope encouraged them by

rights and privileges. They became an army of *yanitchari* like those of the sultan, only without sword and musket.

The mistake of this institution was the bold presumption, that human nature could be subdued and stamped out, and that the young members, thus disciplined, would turn out as serviceable as the old recluses, but far better in learning. Popes did not count upon evolution and progress; and this great mistake was dearly paid for by the Papacy. Human nature can be bent, can be trampled down, but it cannot be stamped out. Celibacy and seclusion, notwithstanding all the blood-curdling barbarities of their enforcement, demanded abolition, broke forth century after century in crimes, riots, petitions and in all possible means within the reach of the enslaved clergy and monks. The peasants were serfs, the clergy slaves. Betterment of the people's existence could not be expected reasonably from either the pontiff or the emperor. Italians, French, Germans and English all had their own masters, they were all sent and pushed to fight each other, there was no outlook for a united political revolt, nor were the nations mature for achieving such a great success. The peasantry had scarcely bread enough to eat and were extremely ignorant. Several open rebellions burst out in distinct places and countries, but all such attempts were easily drowned in torrents of blood. And yet all was ready to explode, but the energetic leader was wanting. Whence could the

world reasonably expect such a leader? Not from the serfs, nor from the kings and individual nobles. The next to try was the priest.

As we stated, religion was everything and everywhere; and so if a priest had the courage to run the risk, he was to be at once a believer and a heretic, and yet irreproachable in character. A revolutionary priest had also to be a good theologian to show his cause against the pope and the world. He could not rise against his own king, for he would have been beheaded and excommunicated at the same time; but he could run his risks against the pope, provided he did not teach downright atheism or even infidelity. Religion was to be the hinge of such a movement. Catholic Church institutions have a double foundation; one is the Bible, the other the traditions. The traditions are by their very nature intractable, unapproachable, although too much exposed to attacks; but they are abstract things, while the Bible is tangible; all there is necessary about it is, just to say, at any page where you happen to open it, this verse means this, and not that. It is certain that the church will deny it; but if you are heard by the people, in their vernacular, so that they may catch the words, you may rest assured that you will find backers and followers. It is but natural that John Wycliffe should have commenced the work by translating the Bible into the vernacular. His attempt, however, to draw away from Rome the whole English nation was abortive for various rea-

sons, and so was that of his successor, John Huss. Still his movement shook the pillars of Rome and prepared the way for Dr. Martin Luther, the father of the successful Reformation.

Now here is that much talked-about, misunderstood, and misrepresented great Reformation, which it is partly the object of our book to discuss. How Protestants extol it, how the Catholics sputter against it! Which party is right?

I must state here, that I am not concerned in either way. I am not Catholic, I am not Protestant, I am not religionist in any meaning of the word; consequently my mind is not biased by party spirit, and so I try to be just and fair, in both directions.

The history of the Reformation has not yet been written. All that Catholics and Protestants have done in this direction is but an insult to the muse of history, and is nothing more than fanatical passion and party blindness.

The Catholics strive to convince the world that their church is the only way to "salvation;" that their church is holy and immaculate; that the pope is personified truth and sanctity; and, that any one who dares criticise or think differently from them is a criminal, a dishonest man, well deserving the gallows or the stake in this world, and the bottom of hell in the next. In their eyes Martin Luther was a drunken brute, a scoundrel, an ignorant and malicious ass, the son of perdition; his wife a run-

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y nun, a prostitute, and both sacrilegious vow-breakers and criminals. All the Reformers to them the runaway priests, drunkards, ignorant blasphemers, rebels well deserving death by slow fire.—Men entertaining such views in our days, to say the least, idiots, and not accountable for their sayings.

Protestants on the other hand foolishly ruminate on “corruption” of Rome, the crimes of the popes, “licentiousness” of the priests, and not one of them would moderate his own indignation over the traffic in indulgences.” In their esteem every Catholic was a fanatic, every priest and monk an idiot, and the pope the Antichrist; while Martin Luther was the only learned man, the only honest man, the only sincere monk, the only saint, and nothing is true but what he said.

The truth lies in the middle. The Catholics will denounce monachism if they are monks, or if they are not monks their talk is vain, for they could not know Luther's situation. The Protestants knowing nothing about the inner life of the Catholic church, have not an idea of monastic life, consequently they cannot even dream of Luther's true and noblest motives. All their talk is but guess-work. It is absolutely certain that Luther received his impulses and motives toward his work and enterprise in the monastery and not in theology, popery, or in any other thing. Here I give a good hint to the future historian of the Reformation as to where to look in what direction to investigate for the motives

that prompted Luther, and also as to how he became a "Reformer" in spite of his own intentions.

The writer of the present pages went precisely through the same career as Dr. Martin Luther did. From college and novitiate up to the professorship of Theology and Hebrew, from a candidate up to Superior through all branches of monachism, from the small catechism up to 'Thomas Aquinas, from Latin grammar up to the exegesis of the Hebrew Bible, till, making the same experiences as Luther did, wading through the same doubts and temptations as Luther did, he finished the rich experience in common-sense agnosticism, while Luther, living in that peculiar, bigoted age, stopped at "Reformation." I do not blame him for this; had he gone further, he would have accomplished nothing, but certainly would have lost his life for nothing. People were unripe, ignorant, and he himself prejudiced and a bigot. In our days no Luthers are possible, but learned monks leaving the Roman Catholic Church are frequent occurrences. In my mind there is no difference between Luther and half a dozen modern learned ex-monks whom I saw leave the Church.

Let us think now for a few minutes of those latent agencies that influenced and urged Luther to take the steps he subsequently took.

He joined his order as others did in a youthful age, with unripe mind, undeveloped physical faculties, and without knowing the nature of a human being and the adversity of the monastic insti-

tution thereto. He was under the influence of a superstition, a foolish vow to St. Anne that he would become a monk if she would save him from the disastrous effects of a thunder storm. One who can forget himself in this senseless manner must be considered a fanatic. But nature makes no difference between a deliberate act and fanaticism. As the wise must eat and drink, so must the fanatic. Nutrition furnishes the blood, the brain, the bones and all other parts and liquids of the human body, equally with the wise as with the fool; with a man wearing trousers as well as with those who wear military uniform, monkish garb or petticoat; Luther could be no exception. One man may be more susceptible than another, one will catch up a hint while another needs a blow with a fist; like a good horse that will not bear the sight, much less the sound of a whip, while another will only shake his skin under a comfortable thrashing. So Luther most likely belonged to that better class, for, as we all well know, he was an earnest student for his age and circumstances.

Now I want to give the reader an approximate idea of monastic life, in which I spent eighteen years. Every reader, male or female, can try it practically for a month, as a sort of experiment. Remove all furniture, carpets, pictures, mirrors, mattresses, and all else from a small room, together with all garments but one, and all underwear except a change. Put in an old wood or iron bedstead with a straw mattress, add one pillow of sand, or let us allow hair, add one blanket,

and this shall be the bed. One old fashioned wooden chair, a wooden table, a *flexorium* (*prie-Dieu*), and a crucifix; this is the furniture. Take a few old Latin, Greek, Hebrew books on piety and theology; this is the library. In the morning no breakfast, nor any heat in winter except in a common room heated for common use. Now let the novice rise at five, go out into the cold corridor to pray for ten minutes; five minutes rest (but no light except in common), half an hour meditation in the unheated dining room, and one hour in the unheated hall (for choir); 7.30 rest, clean the room, warm up in the common, go back, get ready for school at 9, at 10 choir for half an hour. The rest of the time let the door be locked from outside, and only opened for dinner, choir at 2, again at 4, till 5.30, and recitation at 6, at 7 supper, at 9 bed time. Meanwhile chop wood, carry water, wash up your floor and that of your hall, in summer dig in the garden, carry water for irrigation. At the same time rough treatment, silence, penance, public confession. Threats of expulsion hover around one's head. Now if the reader will go through this trial for one month patiently, he or she will have a foretaste of what Luther had to go through. But we must not forget that there must come no visitors, no talk; one must sit patiently behind the locked door. Of course the door is not locked in the monastery, but the house is locked, and for novices the novitiate is locked.

True, almost every minute of our time is occupied

somehow; still there is no greater enemy of man than solitude, and loneliness. It is one thing to stay at home and not to go out, and another, to be forbidden to go out. It is one thing not to eat, and another, not to get food when you have the appetite. It is easy to say that the mind must be kept busy, pray, and so on, then there will be no "temptation." So called "temptations" are as natural consequences of digestion and nutrition as are any other necessities of the body. You might as well say: Study and pray, and you will not feel hungry, thirsty, sleepy, and so forth. Our instinct of reproduction is as unconquerable as other bodily necessities. Even Jesuit casuists cannot deny the fact, but unblushingly say that "nature will find its way," which suggestion is as unnatural as it is impertinent. All mechanical appliances, all moral and physical means have been a million times attempted and honestly, scrupulously tried by honest and chaste monks and nuns; but finally the most heroic person will ask himself or herself: "*Cui bono?*" What is all this for, anyhow? Why should I torment myself in this manner? Why should I purposely destroy nature's noblest gift? Is that a religion which demands this from me? What God must that be which creates me male and then wants me to destroy my sex? Is such a God a reality? Or, does God really demand this from a human being? Does Jesus teach this? Is it necessary to my salvation? Let us see the Bible, let

us search and investigate it for ourselves. Millions of monks and nuns have done such investigations in the Bible; thousands came out atheists, thousands infidels, and hundreds of thousands became in heart Protestants before and after Luther.

We can be positive that Luther went through this phase before the Dominicans appeared in the vicinity of Wittenberg. *Cherchez la femme*. Woman is in the background of the question, and it is dishonest to deny it. Not that Luther was more "*mulierosus*" (a runner after women) than any other respectable man; but just as much as any respectable man. An honest man like Luther could not stoop down to those abominable practices that are carried on in monasteries and convents, practices that we feel loth even to mention by name, he wished to extricate himself of these devil-webs and embrace married life according to natural and social law. But as yet he had no clew whereby to begin to argue and convince his honest conscience that he was not committing a breach of his vow; for, this he could not do honestly. Many thousands of priests and monks argued this way before him and since him. As he seemed to have believed sincerely in the Godhood of Rabbi Yeshúa, consequently in soul and salvation, he strove to find a passage in the gospels or the epistles of Paul, which would guarantee the supposition that a man could be saved without self-mortification, without self-denial, without asceticism, without monastic extremes. He was in

wretched misery, extremely unhappy, like all other monks before and after him who had brains to think and hearts to feel, and are eternally forbidden to love or tell anybody of their secret. Thus the hellish torment is still aggravated by prudent silence, when there is not a friend to whom one can unbosom one's self. He dared not trust his secret to anyone for fear that he might be denounced.

Amidst his tribulations, scruples and doubts he gained the confidence of his Provincial, John von Staupitz, who felt interested in him on account of his scholarship. In confidential talk he opened his heart to the Provincial, a man of experience and of similar disposition. The subject of their conversation was about monastic life as the true means of salvation. Monastic life is a repentance for anterior sins and a remedy against occasion to sin. Self-mortification was the essence of this secluded life, and by this mortification the monk or nun earned merits, the merits were compassed by God, and if they outweighed the sins of the repentant, he or she became justified, his or her soul saved, he or she became a saint. But such an earning of merits is but a slow death, perpetual torments, excruciation of body and soul, impairing faith, strength and health, still leaving anxiety and worriment. Could that theory be the true one? Couldn't it be overthrown? For example, take out self-affliction, mortification and repentance altogether and leave faith alone, which is cumbersome enough in itself; would this alone not cover

the whole economy of salvation? John von Staupitz came out boldly by saying: "There is no true repentance other than that which flows from the love of God and His righteousness;" in other words: No need of these sufferings and self-torment; if you have sinned and after it you learn to love God and feel ashamed of having committed sin against Him, and now repent sincerely that you have done it, this is the only repentance possible or necessary. Luther was delighted. His conscience was relieved at once, no scruples tormented him, no vows and monachism appeared to be a burden to him after this. Faith and love of God he had abundantly, why should he strive to earn merits by self-mortification? It is enough to believe and love God, does not St. Bernard say so? Does St. Paul not declare so repeatedly? He had it! He had found it!

Nothing could be more simple, more clear and manifest than that! How in the world could the whole Christian world not see it at once? "Faith alone justifies!" Why, it is just as simple as the egg of Columbus! To save your soul, to become a saint, is perfectly easy and can be guaranteed; all you have to do is to believe that Rabbi Yeshúa was God, he came down from heaven, he wrought miracles, the Romans executed him for the sins of the inhabitants of this planet; he satisfied God for all sins; and this belief renders you sin-proof. Faith alone justifies!

Henceforth he could see nothing in the Bible, nothing in the holy fathers but that one doctrine so

sweet, so blissful for himself, in his scruples concerning monastic life at large, and celibacy in particular. He was blind for everything else. Thus he did not see what Paul means by that *faith* in Yeshúa ; he did not distinguish the church and Christianity as established, and Christianity as preached to infidels. Paul preached Messianism to Jews and heathen Greeks, that they could not be saved unless they believed in the Messiah, no matter how virtuous they were otherwise ; faith in Yeshúa was a *conditio sine qua non*. But he could not see how ridiculous it was, and is, to preach to *believers* that they must believe, and do nothing else but believe, if they wished to be saved. Luther repeated that axiom so many times that it became more than simple conviction in him, it developed into a mania. Indeed, it was a cheap bargain, cheap salvation even in that ignorant age when all knowledge consisted of ridiculous theology. Priests, monks and nuns were at once aroused ; for they all believed, they all wished for justification, they all were utterly disgusted with monasticism and celibacy, there could be no cheaper salvation than the one proffered by Luther. Practically speaking it was a strike of the German clergy against their Italian masters.

Unfortunately for Rome and the Papacy, Tetzel just happened to preach indulgences, pouring oil upon Luther's fire. Luther did not see in his blindness that his countrymen were believers, so it could not matter whether they did participate

in those indulgences or not; nor did he preach anything but indulgences underbidding the pope. The latter gave salvation for money; Luther could not compete with him in the soul-saving market, so he preached gratis salvation to all if they would only follow him instead of the pope. Both traffics were immoral, Luther's not less than that of the pope. We doubt however very much and very seriously if Tetzel sold indulgences for money as Protestant writers claim, just to blacken Rome more than is true, and to exculpate Luther and his followers to the same extent. The opportunity was a welcome one for Luther; a singular coincidence between his new idea and the chance to expound it, when Germany was *belabored*, as it were, and plowed, prepared for his purpose. He knew well, because he saw it, and we can safely say, he discussed it in the monastery as well as in the University with his friends, that a protest against such an abuse would be received with applause. There is no reason therefore to admire his courage. If his experience had shown that the protest was unpopular, he could recant his "error" before it was too late. Another advantage for his cause was the political situation. Had Germany been like England or France, one country under one monarch, affairs would have taken another course; but as things were, it was certain that one or another of the princes would espouse his cause, make it a national affair against Italy, and the victory was assured.

Again, though there was a theological quarrel among monks and priests, of which the general public knew and understood nothing, yet these monks could accomplish nothing without the ignorant masses; for, after all, their bread and butter depended on what they could not earn but by theology and preaching, which always presupposes a congregation of producers who are willing to support a couple of parasites. All the Reformers had to tell the masses was that if they helped the movement through, Germany would pay no more money to the pope; that they would be independent of "maccaroni eating Italians;" that they would do away with Latin "hocus-pocus," but would pray and sing in their own genuine German, all else being roguery and humbug. Add to it, that they were promised to elect their own priests and bishops, participate in the "Lord's supper" and have the right to interfere in church business, management and regulation; have no fast-days, no idle holidays, but all would be national, just and right; while Rome was Italian, the pope, the cardinals, bishops, one and all, liars, extortionists, licentious scoundrels; the book of Revelation tells true prophecies against the pope and the Roman Church—Pray, what wonder that Luther dared step out, and that his "Reformation" took? Cheap salvation, no tax, national, not foreign; democratic, not autocratic; rights, privileges, and no duties; religious freedom without expenses of money or blood: what on earth could

Reformation offer cheaper, easier and more agreeable than this? Why should they not get followers, and in consequence their bread and butter? Look around even to-day, when few people care for religions; every ex-priest, ex-monk, ex-preacher can and does recruit a congregation, if he has but a little energy and hypocrisy; for they have no other trade. Brooklyn, New York, Chicago are full of such little congregations, and I do not envy their success and pluck. How could have Luther not succeeded with such a simplified catechism as his, when he had no competitor in the market, in creating a sect, and in making a gigantic rent in German Christianity?

The Saxons were the last, except the Hungarians, who accepted the religion of Rome, and were the first to shake it off. The Reformation was carried through without almost any resistance, owing to the emperor's troubles in Hungary with the Turks. Luther lived long enough to see his labors carried out successfully and die with clear conscience, for he accomplished much more than he had anticipated. Germany sided with him, almost to a man; so did Sweden, Denmark, Holland, Switzerland and England, wherever Germanic blood was flowing in the veins of men. There appeared, of course, local Reformers, local reforms, difficulties, quarrels, and so forth; but in the main it is Luther's work, Luther's enterprise, Luther's victory. And all this sprang up from the insensate law of celibacy and monastic vows. There will come a time, when that same source will produce

another trouble for Rome, and will eventually wipe out Rome altogether.

The effects of this wholesale defection from Rome was the consequence of the laws of evolution as much as the destruction of dams by the upheaval of waters. Overtaxing, overstraining human patience, is throwing millions of people into bitter sufferings, misery and desperation, as is easily foreseen, must sooner or later break out into violent and general conflagration. Luther was but instrumental, like the first stone or pebble washed out of a dike. Who can expect that a movement of such dimensions would go off smoothly without bloodshed? The introduction of Christianity swallowed down more blood than its reformation. Let us therefore not talk of it. But whether Reformation at large was a blessing or a curse for the human race we can easily divine. It were vain, on the other hand, to deny that it had also many sad consequences, the effects of which never will be healed, as for example divisions of nations into Catholics and Protestants, as we see in Germany, Switzerland, Hungary, or Protestants and Protestants, as in England and the United States. Yet we must acknowledge that it brought a world of good upon all civilized nations.

The germ of reaction was in the monastic institution, especially in the fanatic institution of celibacy. Monks and priests rebelled, abolished monasticism and celibacy, attacked Papacy, dilacerated the church, the religion itself, aroused nationalism; this led to

unification of Germany, conquest of Ireland, unification of England, independence of Holland, breaking down of the Roman empire, unification of Italy, abolition of the temporal power of the popes, their relegation and confinement to the Vatican, and possibly to the final abolition of the Papacy. A spirit of independence was created after a victorious struggle against papal autocracy, and the great colossus, the Atlas of the entire Christian world, *authority* was shattered and demolished, opening the door to free investigation. This led to learning, experimental studies, this again to great discoveries in all fields of human knowledge. Meanwhile a new world was discovered, peopled first by adventurous Latins, then by religious fanatics and dissenters. New geography, new navigation were inaugurated, still another new continent discovered with numerous islands, which gave new homes, gave treasures and new comforts to the human race. New astronomy, new chemistry followed with innumerable improvements for mankind. Literature sprung up, different from theology, which enabled scholars, by the aid of the art of printing, to communicate and exchange ideas, discuss political, social, scientific and religious questions of the day. Doubt was not only created, but justified, honored with due rights; free thought, free speech became possible. Doubt was systematized by philosophers, scholasticism attacked, rendered unpopular; inductive and experimental philosophy installed, which soon led to the revival

of philosophy. With Baco Verulamius (Lord Francis Bacon) on one hand and Cartesius on the other, two new principles were introduced into the world of thinking, followed close at the heels by Baruch Spinoza, Leibnitz, Voltaire, Diderot, D' Holbach and the encyclopædists. France was precipitated into a revolution of the most bloody character that ever stained human history. But, considering the deep roots of monasticism, clericalism and the fact that France was the real home, strength, protection and hotbed of the Papacy, we cannot wonder if the reaction brought forth was exactly of the same degree and ratio as was the evil of monasticism and papistry. In the heat of revolution the hot-blooded French abolished religion altogether and Reason was proclaimed as god. Still, people were not yet ripe for peaceable and rational atheism, so theism was the ruling idea, under the influence of which—fortunately for common sense—the constitution of the United States was framed, without any mention of religion, or gods, or theology in it. During the general conflagration under the great Napoleon, thinking continued its course. Kant wrote his immortal "Critique of Pure Reason," "Critique of Practical Reason," etc., while in England and France theism was still predominant and led their philosophers. With Kant philosophy became atheistic, as continued by Hegel, Fichte, Schelling, Schopenhauer, Edward von Hartmann, H. Lotze, Helmholtz and others in Germany. England and France relapsed into sleep;

J. S. Mill trying to overthrow Aristotle's logic in England, and Victor Cousin singing notes of naïve nursery melodies in France, as a sort of religious mania, paving the road for God once more. Poor Cousin is dead and gone, and on his place Ribot is standing with an array of modern thinkers. In England agnosticism is the grand idea around which the greatest thinkers and scientists of the English world cluster with Herbert Spencer at the head, as in Germany with Häckel. Darwin directed the flood, and there is no human or divine power to turn philosophy into retrogradation since Darwin laid down the principle of evolution. We all are bound to become unbelievers. We are not ripe enough ourselves? Our children will be.

Papal authority denied and overthrown has put the Reformers into a very peculiar position. Everything that made up Christianity was against the Reformers. As we said, Christianity was not made like Judaism upon codified laws. There were no laws and formal constitution for the Christian society. It was started without a definite system, without a model or outlines; it was simply preached together from all corners of Greece, Judea, Egypt and Rome to single congregations to believe in the Messiah whose return was to end the world. There were no ceremonial, no rites, no ritual, nor even a circumscribed religion, much less an organized society, clergy, moral code and social ethics. Paul adjusted all the quarrels, brought men together to listen to his own

harangues, and put in or appointed superintendents, giving them his own "holy spirit" and orders to baptize in the "name of Yeshúa." But what did they pray, how did they pray, how was the baptism performed? To an unprejudiced mind, that never heard of sacraments, the reading of Paul's letters would suggest the idea that baptism was an altogether unimportant ceremony, conferred any way at all in the name of Yeshúa. That it was understood so by those who heard Paul and his colleagues, is manifest from the fact, that they baptized in various ways. So it must have been with all other sacraments, and practices, whatever they may have had, for even Peter and Paul had a falling out about contradicting dispositions and regulations. In fact up to the time of St. Cyprian nothing was firmly established. The congregations copied one another, regulated their own creed, rites, ceremonies, "Lord's suppers," or whatever they may have had. The eastern congregations slowly collapsed, dropped off, or were put out of existence by the Mohammedan conquerors, and the rest scattered in Greece and Rome. The Greek church developed in one way, the Latin in Rome in another. In the East Constantinople was everything, so was Rome in the West. All eastern churches or congregations were formed in imitation of the principal one in Constantinople, and the same took place in the western empire, in imitation of the congregation of Rome. So the church grew up gradually and became what the heretics through all ages moulded

her. She is and was like an old woman, quarreling with everybody, contradicting everybody. Whatever a dissenter out of her reach asserted, she had to contradict it, deny it and make a dogma out of the denial. Whatever such dissenters doubted or denied, again became a dogma. Her life was but a scandalous row and dispute, quarrel and recrimination, maledicting, cursing and uttering anathema, like an infuriated beldame. The church was what useless, absurd controversies and heretical disputes made her, therefore it is vain to look back for written constitution or regulation; she was guided by her whim and caprice, by chances and the spirit of contradiction. This is the "tradition" upon which the church of Rome rests.

Now the Reformers could not search for an original plan or form of constitution to hold up for themselves to copy. Written documents, such as ancient rituals, but very few are extant and those are not from what they call "apostolic times," but of much later years. Other descriptions of the manners and usages of the primitive Christians we have none, except a few fragments from Justin Martyr and a few other quotations scattered about in the writings of the early fathers; and so it was a very meagre clew for the Reformers to go by. There was nothing else left than the Bible,—only a secondary authority in the Catholic Church as is easily understood.

Since religion is but belief, and belief is but assent given to assertion, it is natural that there must be

somebody to listen and another to talk. The ignorant and simple is naturally the listener and believer, the presumptuous, on the contrary, is the talker. Those doing the talk, are the "*Ecclesia docens*" (the teaching Church), and those who listen, are the "*Ecclesia discens*" (the learning Church), both together are the "*Ecclesia militans*" (militant, or active Church), and the departed members are the "*Ecclesia triumphans*" (the triumphant church).

Now, as to the talking part in the trade of religion, there was no organization in the world better equipped, better stocked and fitted than the old Roman Catholic Church. Her resources were more inexhaustible than all the oceans of this globe. The talker's authority was higher than any authority that human ingenuity could invent. The teaching church was under the immediate guidance of the Holy Ghost; the head of the talking church, the pope, was the vicar of the son of God and a representative of God upon earth. The traditions were emanating from the founders of the church, the "apostles" of Rabbi Yeshúa. The Bible was dictated by God, and, although written by men, was inspired by the Holy Ghost, not word by word, but in the essence of its teachings. Notwithstanding these high vouchers for the veracity of the assertions of the "old mother" Church, there were always some difficulties encountered with in the Bible as well as in the traditions, owing, no doubt, to the limited sphere of the weak human reason, and, also, to the

sins and human arrogance of the believers. The talking church had to patch those occasional cracks, leakages, crevices, fissures, and this repairing business gave work to thousands of the most learned heads of the talkers, keeping them busy in councils, synods, congregations, at the papal court, in thousands of bishoprics, monasteries, abbacies, parishes all over the world for fifteen hundred years. It should give us a fair idea of the material gathered, written and piled up during all those centuries, and what a store of talking matter was thus heaped up in libraries. The councils and synods alone furnished material for more than a thousand folio volumes! Did you ever see an ecclesiastical library with Tobatus, Biblia Maxima, 17 to 28 folio volumes each in hogskin, and brass or steel clasps on each book? Did you ever see the Bollandists, the collections of papal bulls, decretals; the "*Jus canonicum*" (Canon law) the Patristical department, the historical department? It is such an array of works, that the very contemplation of it makes the head dizzy. We may say it is the literary fruit of the literary world of all nations for all preceeding centuries. Was ever anybody so well furnished and stocked with all that was required to talk, teach and "prove" as that venerable old "mother" Church?

The church, even in her tender age, was extremely careful to burn all heretical works, that is, all works that contained opinions contrary to that of her own party; and as she was growing, new dogmas and

doctrines were continually developed, it remained a continual necessity to burn books, because there were more and more contradictions, a greater variety of opinions, and a greater number of opponents, denials, scoffers and heretics. The first writers were almost all saints, but a few were inveterate heretics. A little later even the greatest lights, like Tertullian, Origen, and Cyprian became heretics, half heretics and recanters, but four Greek fathers and four Latins, were declared "Doctors;" the number of the latter, however, was increased in the later years. By the radical operation of burning the books of the opposers, a great part of the written traditions were obliterated, to the great detriment of historical criticism, and for but very little benefit to the litigant church; because heresies could not be stopped. There were 56 gospels, a great number of epistles of apostles, bishops, martyrs, saints, of Rabbi Yeshúa, of Mary his mother, many "acts" of martyrs, constitutions of the apostles, an "authentic" report of Pontius Pilate to the emperor and innumerable other written pious frauds, which were partly destroyed, partly lost. What a damage to historical truth! The Holy Ghost helped the fathers to select the four extant gospels out of 56, which all were placed at the altar in Nice and the Holy Ghost, upon the fervent prayer of the fathers, chose out the four, throwing down and scattering on the floor the other 52 gospels.

Thus, by the time of Luther all documents, written

traditions, works of the fathers and the Bible itself were expurgated and almost nothing left for the Reformers to gain a foothold.

What were Luther and his learned friend, Philip Melanchthon, to do? There were only such traditions extant and accessible to them as favored Papacy. Not a thing was available even had he prepared for a heresy and secession, but, as we know well, he was not, and only acted on his momentary impulse of bitter hatred against his monastic vows, and was only searching after a loophole to get rid of them conscientiously. This loophole was necessarily to be found in the Bible, the "revealed word of God." But the Bible at that time was only a sort of guide book for the church, the supreme authority was not the Bible, but the pope, not the "revealed word of God," but the "representative of God." The Reformer had no choice. If he contradicted the Bible, he contradicted the pope; if he attacked the pope, he attacked also the Bible. The only way open to Luther was to draw a line of demarkation between the "representative of God" and the "revealed word of God," between the pope and the Bible, and make the bold and startling assertion that Bible and pope were in contradiction. This was to be the *first assertion* or *first talk*. If he found listeners to, and believers, he could find another assertion, then a third, a fourth, and so on, till he could open a new stand of religious auction to compete with the pope in saving souls. He actually chose this procedure,

elevating the Bible above the pope, indeed above the whole church without scruple, nay, with a fanatical rage, that was blind to reason, blind to history, blind for everything else.

Few people understand and still fewer can appreciate the situation of that man. Protestants do not realize Luther's position, they cannot imagine the hot water into which Luther plunged himself, nor his motives and superhuman struggles against his scruples, against his intentions, and how the deep water carried him, without finding solid ground under his feet. Our Protestants of to-day know only of his courage, and extol Luther, extol his "love of truth," his "love of God," his "righteousness," his deep repugnance toward the "corruption of Rome" and so forth. This is a matter of course with born Protestants who know nothing of Rome. Luther however was born Catholic, educated Catholic, was a priest, a monk, a professor of theology; he knew his church, he was a believer. It was with bleeding heart that he attacked his mother church, with bleeding heart did he see the churches robbed, ransacked, sacred vessels, pictures, places sacrilegiously smashed, torn down and outraged. That was not Luther's intention. All he wished was to build a nest for himself and other priests and monks who felt like him; who wished to shake off monastic shackles, establish a few liberal parishes and continue priestly functions, but in free, married state. But he made the experience very

soon that his modest attempt to discuss (not deny) the doctrine of indulgences was blown up into a universal church question, drawing in princes, emperor, pope and all. Certainly he was shivering in his shoes, and knew not what his next step would be. If he was honest he had to take the consequences; but he half ignorantly, half maliciously retreated behind a hypocritical sophism, that the church should prove to him and demonstrate *from the Bible*, that indulgences are a divine institution, or that he was wrong, and in that case he would humbly recant. Protestants are delighted in this vain, ignorant and hypocritical braggery. In the first place Luther had no right to ask any questions. In the second; as a professor of theology he was expected to know that the pope, or the Roman church did not claim that the indulgences were a biblical doctrine, no more than canonization, no more than the mass, purgatory and a number of other similar institutions in the Roman Church. How could he then, ask the Church to convince him of this or that? If the Church consented to regard the merits of Rabbi Yeshúa as a treasury, and the pope was allowed to impute it to any Christian, it was done openly, and was none of Luther's business. Nor did he attack indulgences at first, but only their "sale." Moreover, Christianity existed before the Bible existed (we mean the "New" Testament). Furthermore, the Bible was written by the members of the Church, therefore it cannot be regarded superior to the Church,

which is *being guided* (as they believe) by the Holy Ghost. Finally, as everybody well knows, the Bible is no "*sacramentarium*," no liturgy, no ritual, does not contain all the doctrines of the Church, nor all the teachings of Rabbi Yeshúa, nor all the teachings of Shaw-ool (Paul), for he says himself that as to the rest, he would make dispositions in person, as he also refers more than once to his teachings, dispositions, evangelization, etc., which all are not given in the New Testament. How could Luther, if a theologian and an honest man, ask the Church to convince him by arguments and quotations from the Bible? He might have called for Homer as well. But our Protestants do not understand this. How could they?

The trouble with Luther and all the Reformers was and is still, that they confound Bible with Bible. If they had the necessary ecclesiastical erudition they would know that the Old Testament is a collection of Hebrew literature. The first part consists of the codified laws of Moses, his ethics and his cosmogonical philosophy, together with the legendary history of the Jews. Then come a few historical books, again a few popular philosophical treatises, love and religious poems, and the rest didactical and poetical writings. The Old Testament is a *code of laws*, a *pattern* according to which the Jewish society was to be established and live in all phases, conditions and calling of life, upon theocratical principles of government. This is the *Bible* properly

speaking ; and the Protestants take this idea, transfer it to the New Testament, as if it, too, were a *code of laws*, a *pattern*, upon which Christian society were to be modelled, framed and governed. They fail to see that the New Testament is only a historical narration of what a certain (probably fictitious) Rabbi Yeshúa had done and said. They fail to see that the New Testament does not establish any government (except in the heavens), does not prescribe what clothes to wear, what to eat, in what sort of houses to live, how to cultivate land, how to sacrifice, what money and how much to pay or charge ; whether, we, too, must carry a spade in the hand and go outside of the city, etc. Luther was, and the Protestants and their preachers are blind to see that the Bible and its principles are not only no laws and constitution for any society or State, but the very reverse of it. No society, no State, least of all a civilized one could be founded upon the Bible either "New" or "Old" Testament ; for, as we have shown in the outset, our civilization exists *in spite* of the Bible, it rests upon the very opposite principles. To use another illustration, for instance, had a Paul or Rabbi Yeshúa taken a silver coin in Boston at the time, when our Yankees cast the tea into the sea, and said : "Whose is this image and superscription?" They would have answered : "The King of England's." And then if he had told them : "Render therefore unto Cæsar (King of England) the things which are Cæsar's (the King

of England's); and unto God the things that are God's," I think they would have flung him after the tea. Had they obeyed him, there were no United States to-day.

Yet Luther, as he had no other fulcrum or basis to support himself, shamelessly extolled the Bible above church, pope, reason, and was not ashamed to denounce even human reason as the "prostitute of the devil." The pope was Antichrist, Rome was the "purpled beast," and Aristotle (!) "an acknowledged liar," and "an indolent ass." What a shame to speak in such terms of one of the greatest geniuses, the greatest thinkers, the best men that the human race ever produced! And all this to extol his hobby-horse the "revealed word of God," the Bible. Just listen to his absurd mania: "*Dieselbigen Wort sind nicht Platonis, Aristotelis und anderer hohen Gelährten und Menschen, sondern Gott redet selber da!*" (Those same words are not of Plato, Aristotle and others of high learning and of men; it is God himself who speaketh here!) His followers were and the preachers of to-day are of the same spirit. Some of them tried to patch up scientific manuals from passages of the Bible, like Epiphanius who made up a "Mineralogy" from the same source! Reformers in this respect, in fact, we can safely say in all other respects, were more fanatical, more enraged and vulgar bigots than dignified old Rome, with her decrepit bigotry. While Rome claimed supreme authority on earth for herself, and created

emperors, kings and nobles, she never dared proclaim theocracy; Rome had prudence, self-respect and much dignity, to say nothing of her skill and adroitness in managing affairs.

But the Bible-fanaticism of Luther grew up from that one sentence "Faith justifies alone," which was a balm to his bleeding heart, and which absolved him from his vows of chastity in his conscience, and started him out on his career. Neither was the Bible a ready thing for him. The Roman Church regards it what it is—a secondary source (of course, revealed, in their estimation), divided into "*pericopae*," arranged and printed in the missals and rituals for mass and preaching, otherwise never used, never read. There were but few copies of it to be found in his days.

By sedulous search and reading the Bible for the purpose of finding favorable passages for his own aims, Luther became very familiar with its contents, but found that not all books and chapters were so. What was he to do with such chapters and passages? Declare them spurious, not revealed, of course. And again, the Bible was in Latin, how could he use it publicly with the ignorant? The Church knew the Bible at least as well as he; Bible dispute with the Church was impossible, for it was simply a historical and doctrinal guide book only; he however meant to make it what the Old Testament was for the Jews, the supreme authority, of which the rabbis were only its expounders, interpreters and executors. This

suitd Luther's taste. Let, then, the Bible, be the "revealed word of God," the supreme authority, although a dead book, dead letters; while the "representative of God," the "vicar of Jesus Christ," the "infallible church under the direct guidance of the Holy Ghost," living and thinking men were all mistaken, bad, corrupt, and not to be listened to. As he had no other choice in getting out of his predicament, pushed by Church and State, he resolved to translate the Bible into German, aided by other monks and priests eager for freedom, to throw himself upon the ignorant masses, to hold up the Bible, as if it were a code of laws like the books of Moses, and make them believe that it was the highest authority, the only source of Christianity, regardless of historical truth, and unjustly, criminally concealed and neglected by the church and popes. Thus he was to appear the only conscientious man among the whole clergy; the only friend of truth, the only friend and benefactor of mankind, while the whole hierarchy was corrupt, dishonest and the entire church mistaken! He added a grain of national pride. German patriotism was insulted, oppressed and trampled down by the Italians; and the German people, most especially the ignorant elements and the oppressed lower clergy and monks, all victims of celibacy, joined him with enthusiasm.

In the mind of thinking people, purely on theological grounds, Luther's position was an untenable one, and his cause positively wrong without a grain

of truth. That does not mean that the results were not welcome. Certainly the Papacy was corrupt, is corrupt, is founded upon political and financial tricks and manœuvres; the Church and Papacy were and are a nest of corruption, a hot-bed of oppression and tyranny. Certainly, the authority and claims of the popes and church are a blot and an eternal disgrace upon the entire civilized human society; and whosoever will overthrow them, must be regarded a great benefactor of our race.

A guide for the human family, by all means, is a most welcome idea. In spite of all the progress we made, improvements introduced in the world, mankind is still very, very far from being what it might and ought to be, happy. Millions and millions shed tears in distress, in misfortunes, in misery, worriment and destitution. Means and necessities of life are converted into values, represented by coins and bills, preserved in iron safes and behind steel bars, withholding food, fuel, shelter and clothing from the reach of those who most need them; who *could* and who *do* produce them, but are unable to store them up, exchange and convert them into value. A righteous, wise guide were certainly most welcome, who could teach us a better distributive system, a more reasonable theory of exchange between industry, production and storing of products. A guide, that could teach mankind how to acquire homes, how to keep the existing ones; a guide, who could teach us reciprocity in help, in mutual support, in abating ego-

tism, subduing avarice, and sordid selfishness ; a guide who would lead us to thoroughly despise and abandon heartlessness, sacrilegious advantage-taking of the needy and helpless ; a guide that would convince us and compel us to practice not "Christian charity," "love of God," but an honest sense of duty, the equality, value and dignity of a human being as a member of the human family, in which not one should be hungry, homeless, destitute and unhappy ; such a guide, such a "Messiah," such a "Redeemer," "Saviour," "God" is wanted and would be welcomed upon our planet by white and Ethiopian, by Chinese and Malayan, by savage and civilized, by honest and dishonest, by atheist and Quaker, by soldier and monk, by statesman and beggar, by philosopher and cannibal, by artist and nomad barbarian, by man and beast.

But to create a society to mutter certain words in certain language, in certain fashion, in certain time and place ; to sweep together hordes of idle asses, who neither produce nor teach others how to produce ; to make an eunuch preside over such an indolent crowd of asses, and call him infallible ; to regard him and his celibate drones the interpreters of a fictitious "supreme being ;" to create slavery, ignorance and unhappiness ; to (speaking with Voltaire) spit into the mouths of infants, or cut off a part of the infant's body for vain ceremony,—such acts, such an institution are a gigantic fraud and an outrage against miserable, suffering humanity.

But, on the other hand, to open a new shop with a new sign upon it, "Cheap Salvation," in which the tiara-monkey is ridiculed, his charms and instruments of sorcery, prayer-machines, gowns, frocks, petticoats are exposed for public amusement (for cash); and where the quack shouts to the mobs that it is not the tiara-monkey who should be regarded supreme authority upon the earth, but it is a second-hand book, translated from Latin, translated from Greek, compiled from Hebrew stories; and that whoever purchases one and studies it and believes it, and frequents that same shop, would certainly be happy after he or she should die,—this is not only an outrage against poor, suffering humanity, but also an insult and mockery.

You can turn a worn-out, threadbare, old-fashioned coat in and out, it will not keep out cold, it will not shelter the homeless. Human society is not after a ridiculous white papal petticoat, nor after an up and down translated second-hand book. Society had enough of both; human society has its best obtainable guide, *human reason*, taught by experience. Human society, led by reason and experience, acknowledges no other sacrament than *honor*, no other church than the *Capitol*, no other revealed or reformed religion and word of God than holy *duty*.

CHAPTER III.

ONE day I had a very pleasant conversation with Courtland Palmer, the prominent liberal thinker, philanthropist, founder and president of the "Nineteenth Century Club," the honest man and Comtean philosopher. Among other things he asked me what my opinion was concerning Protestantism? When I finished, he rose from his half reclining position on the sofa, with an unlighted cigar between his lips, and exclaimed:

"That is exactly my opinion. Protestantism is nothing but a bridge between Catholicism and Infidelity. Those among Protestants who by nature are of orthodox and conservative disposition, will gradually drop off and go back to Rome; the rest, in due time, tired of perpetual negation as a creed, will embrace Infidelity and Agnosticism."

This is a comprehensive, truthful and exact judgment, a philosophy of Protestantism in a nut-shell.

Protestantism, as Protestants themselves must acknowledge, is but an obstinate and persistent heresy. Do they have a positive religion? No. Ask the Episcopal, the Presbyterian, the Baptist, the Methodist, the Moravian, the Adventist, the Congregationalist, the Universalist, the Lutheran, the Calvinist, the Hussite, the Swedenborgian,

what his religion is? He will tell you: "I am a Christian," as if he said: "I am an American," or "I am a man." Again, ask a preacher: "What is the religion of the Protestants?" If he is an honest man he will answer: "The religion of the Protestants is to believe what the Roman church (her mother) disbelieves, and to disbelieve whatever the Roman church believes."

It excites a man's pity to see Protestants drifting hopelessly and aimlessly upon the wide sea of existence, like so many boats without a compass and without an anchor. They have no creed, unless that of the mother church, they have no name, save a negative one, still, they all are "Christians," they all are "true;" they all are the "right church;" they all "save souls;" yet they do not believe each other. What a shame for our modern society, such an absurd state of affairs! Christians are a laughing stock for the Chinese, Hindoo, Moslem and Jew, and yet these same Christians dare importune those sensible infidels, and solicit their conversion to their ridiculous Babel and Bedlam. Not one in ten thousand Protestants knows his own position in matters of belief or religion. Indeed, if they knew their exact place in theological questions, each Protestant would be a living theological encyclopædia. But they are born, the same as all other religionists, and impregnated with the respective belief of the ignorant father or mother. All that the "Protestants" know about their own sect, is that it is the best, the only true

Christian religion, while all others are tissues of mistakes, and the Catholic church is not even Christian. Thus Protestant heresy grows and spreads unchecked, uncared for and unnoticed, till people get tired of this unsystematical lingering, begin to think and reason and drop all churches, leave all preachers and go where common sense leads all men—to systematic unbelief.

Preachers have tried and done their best to unite all Protestant heresies under one denomination. They see, that they are only chips of a block, scattered in a hundred directions; they see, that there must be trouble somewhere, that something is foul with Protestantism, but they are hopelessly blind to see the source of the evil, and in consequence of this mental and moral blindness they will grope in darkness after some thread till doomsday, but all in vain. Unity is impossible in that swarm of sects, for the very essence of Protestantism is contradiction and negation. Rome asserts, they deny; Rome denies, they assert; but Rome is positive, they are negative, Rome is right, they must be wrong. The truth remains that Protestantism is but a state of transition from childhood to manhood, from unripeness to maturity, from religiousness to irreligion, from orthodoxy to infidelity, from Christianity to Atheism. Those seeking unity will sooner or later return to Rome, the rest will continue thinking and doubting until they attain the age of reason, and then they will become the disciples of such men as Thales, Socrates, Epicurus, Zeno,

Democritus, Kant, Darwin, the best men of the human race.

Let us now see if there are any points in which all Protestant sects agree? Yes, there are. But it is surprising to know that they agree only on points on which Luther disagreed with Rome; in other words, they agree on rebellion against the pope and the Roman Church; they agree in Luther's hobby-horse "Justification by faith alone," which means that it is not the existing church that is to be listened to, and to learn from, but the Bible. They all believe in this one absurdity, in this incredibly blind foolishness, no matter how much they may trample down the very heart and essence of Christianity. Most all the sacraments, all rites, the whole organization of the church, all its institutions, ceremonies, nay, Jesus himself is denied (at least by the Unitarians), Luther, the father of the Reformation, is abjured; by others but his hobby, by which he absolved himself from monastic vows and celibacy, is not only believed, but directly extolled above the Church within which that gospel was written, which the church accidentally selected out of fifty-six, when she could have rejected it and taken all or any others from the above mentioned fifty-six. What an insensate obstinacy, what a blindness, craze, mania, to abjure transubstantiation, to reject all sacraments, confession and all, and cling blindly to a book, an obscure book, a spurious history of the founder of Christianity (if he ever existed)! Yet

it is the only thing upon which all Protestant heretics agree!

That Luther extolled the Bible for the reason we repeatedly mentioned, it can be well and easily understood; but that Protestants of to-day still persistently ride upon the same hobby-horse is simply a bewildering inconsistency. Do they not see that the very same hobby is their curse and the source of all their troubles, dissensions, ruin and final catastrophe? Do they not see that the gospel is not the Old Testament, nor the Koran; that no society can be founded upon it? Can they not see that it is but a guide-book, not different from those fifty-two others rejected by the same Church which selected it? Do they not see that the *Church* is the *judge* of the Bible, consequently superior to the Bible. Do these same Protestants not see that they were unable to build up a social organization upon that book? Did Protestants themselves not reject books, chapters and passages of that very Bible, which now they claim to be the supreme authority in faith and morals?

The source of troubles and divisions within Protestantism is—as could be well guessed—that same idol, that same dead book, the Bible. They took as granted, that it being the “revealed book of God,” the Church was founded upon its teachings; whereas just the reverse is the truth. The first and the most fatal mistake of Luther and of all Protestants and Reformers after him was the transferring of authority from the pope

to the Bible. Gerson and the Gallicans possessed greater insight, and deeper wisdom, although Luther, too, more than once showed hesitation in the same direction, not wishing openly to declare the pope a lesser authority than the Œcumenical Council, and still lesser than the whole Church. Religious authority in Christianity certainly can never belong to a book or to a person, but to the Christian Church, which created that authority, that book and Papacy itself. No man of reason can contradict or gain-say this. Had Luther not transferred or claimed to transfer authority from pope (and the whole Christendom) to that dead book, there were no Protestantism to-day nor troubles within the fold, and he never would have married fair Catherine Bora, but with him that was the principal and only question. He denounced not only the pope, but the entire Christian Church while extolling the Bible and declaring it inspired !

Another mistake of the Reformers was the declaration that all Christians are ordained priests alike and priesthood abolished whereby the "word of God" became a vulgar matter, discussed by ignorant drunken hordes, in stables, workshops, streets and saloons. Every one of the half-brutes was now a priest, a learned man, a competent preacher. A regular pandemonium arose, which found vent in riots, bloody demonstrations, acts of violence, robbery, iconoclasm, ransacking of cathedrals, monasteries, all of which culminated in murders and atro-

cities. Whoever could afford to buy a copy of the "highest authority in faith and morals," the so-called "revealed word of God," then, of course, a great novelty, both as "the revealed word of God," and as a *printed* book, (printing was a new art, not sufficiently known), did buy a copy even if he could not read. Many of those who could read were at once God-made preachers. Is such a beginning worthy of honorable men? Is it conducive to morality, to the dignity of religion? Compare the above beginning with that of the ignorant Jews of Palestine, called *apostles*. Certainly the latter were more dignified.

Since everybody was a preacher by the simple fact of being baptized; and everybody was a competent interpreter of "the revealed word of God," the consequence was that everybody was entitled to officiate at, and to lead divine worship. This again implied that no theological education was necessary; and for the sake of such preachers the worship was changed from Latin into vernacular, from that magnificent high mass with a bishop for celebrant and a crowd of trained assistants, to mere stupid preaching. The pompous, poetic Christian religion was stripped, spoiled and trampled down as if a ranch of cattle and hogs had effected entrance to an artistic garden. Luther could not depend on ex-priests and ex-monks, for there was probably not a sufficient number of them, or perhaps they were too theologically inclined; he was compelled, therefore, to admit lay-

men, for he had no bishops yet who could ordain priests and keep up succession with church tradition. Having no choice in this question, he simply abolished holy orders altogether. Orders abolished, mass was abolished. The very centre, the very heart of Christianity had to go, in a word, *real presence*, in the last supper—since he could not claim that preachers were competent to transact the functions of ordained priests of Rome, and perform the ceremony and effect what is called “transubstantiation,” by the power of the holy order. Order and real presence were the first two knots around which dissensions and troubles arose, as Christians, even the most liberal-minded, were shocked by such ultra radical changes. But Luther could not stop it; he started the rolling down the hill, there was no help; the avalanche had to roll and dash onwards. If there was no transubstantiation, there was no need of vestments, no need of the sacred vessels, no need of altar, no need of candelabra, no incense, no decoration, no church music, no organ, no crucifix, no perpetual lamp. With one stroke of the pen everything sublime was thrown in the mud, poetry was derided, arts that were inspired by the majestic and aided the external beauty by their co-operation were degraded, the sanctuary was desecrated and abolished; the church of God, the shrine of the saint, with its dim light of the little lamp, once the abode of faith, consolation and hope, where God himself resided in the tabernacle, mysteriously hidden under the

semblance of bread (wafer) and where the piously inclined raised his hat and made the sign of the cross and bent the knee whenever he passed the gates or door of the sacred edifice ; where the afflicted, the bereaved, the orphan, the aged entered, knelt down to open their hearts, their sorrow to God, and find consolation in the solemn and majestic silence of the tall arches dimly lit by colored light,—one and all were abolished. The majestic church, the august cathedral became a lecture-hall of the preacher, with wooden walls, wooden pulpits, cheap carpets, shaped in the form of a circus, amphitheatre, concert hall or theatre. Jesus ceased to be a God present in the eucharist, and was no more worshiped with pompous celebration. His holidays and memorials were abolished, his crosses and pictures were smashed and desecrated. He was once a centre of Christian life, his symbols, emblems, memorials were everywhere ; his sufferings, his passion, nativity, institution of the eucharist, his death, resurrection, ascension, etc., were formerly holidays, days of rest and rejoicing for Christians ; all these were laid waste in desolation. All functions of the priesthood were obliterated. They were no more the fathers of the faithful ; they were no more spiritual advisers for the sinners ; no atonement, expiation, restitution, repentance, vow was asked. No rueful pledges for internal goodness and righteousness were admitted ; confession was derided and rejected, communion was changed into dead, unsystematic practice and a vain rite. Baptism became a

ceremony without graces attached; confirmation was reduced to a dead external rite; matrimony also lost its sacramental dignity, while extreme unction was entirely swept away.

What was left of Christianity?

The preacher and pew-rent.

Yet these same men dare howl with a peculiar rage of fanaticism, "This is the Christian religion!" In truth many are no more Christians than the followers of Mohammed, because they have left of "Jesus Christ" (Rabbi Yeshúa) little more than the Mohammedans have left. Still they are not men enough to come out honestly and reject not only the pope and his church, but reject the Bible, reject the divinity of Rabbi Yeshúa; accept no other authority than that of our natural reason, and like the Mohammedans and Jews give Rabbi Yeshúa his due, if they believe in him, declare him a man, a prophet, like Mohammed or Moses, reject the "Holy Ghost" as a nonentity, embrace monotheism, deism or theism upon which all might agree; then the desolation of temples, churches, sacraments, etc., stands to reason, as they are but old rags of superstition. But to profess Christianity without specific Christian worship, singing Jewish psalms, and going through the performance as acted in their religious amphitheatres, is against reason just as much as against Christianity. If anybody or anything can be Antichrist, it is the hundred-headed Hydra, Protestantism.

Simultaneously with Luther there were other here-

siarchs at work in other countries, in particular on Zwingli, an energetic ex-priest in Switzerland, while in England the King himself led the heresy.

The English heresy is more despicable in its origin than any and all. Luther, as a monk, had a respectable motive, his personal freedom and detestation of monachism; and even if mistaken in the means or doctrine, one can have little doubt but that he acted with faith and sincerity. At all events, he broke down papal tyranny, created political and intellectual freedom; but the heresy inaugurated by the King of England was an outrage upon religion, freedom, morality and decency itself. His "Reformation" was the assassination of his wives, grudge and jealousy against Rome, abuse of his power and authority, and sacrilegious imposition upon his subjects. In short he was a crowned Jack the Ripper, a murderous, theologico-regal maniac.

The original idea of Anglicanism was borrowed from the French clergy, which sought ever since the establishment of Christianity in France, to acquire independent, national self-government, or autonomy in a way, that, although connected by communion in religion and morals with the Roman church, France might have her own ecclesiastical government under her own bishops. France would acknowledge the pope as the head of the church in questions pertaining to faith and morals, but subject in power and authority to the Œcumenical Council. The church of France can use her own language and breviary, and

regulate ritual, canonical and disciplinary questions without responsibility to the pope. This was the essence of the programme of the Gallican church, from the earliest days down to our own, when Le Père Hyacinthe Loyson is at work to resuscitate Gallicanism.

Anglicanism was the ambition of the English people. Just as Luther had inculcated Germanism, advocated German patriotism in religion as well as in politics; so the English came out for national, not Roman Catholicism, with English ritual and liturgy, a married clergy, and above all no monachism. Peaceable reformation of this kind within the limits of mutual concessions, however, was impossible owing to the inflamed passions and despotic nature of the religious question itself on one hand and the autocratic character of the religious party leaders and disputants on the other. Had England been more isolated, matters could have been adjusted to perfect satisfaction, as the vital dogmas of Christianity had hardly been touched upon. The real trouble came from the continent in the shape of Calvinism, introduced from Switzerland, where John Calvin attacked the very backbone of Christianity, the real presence and the mystery of transubstantiation. Old melancholic Calvin declared that the institution of the so-called "Last Supper" or the "Lord's Supper" was nothing but a ceremony, to remind people of the founder, and that there was no sacrament or any religious principle involved in it. The morose bigot would tolerate no

opposition to his views any more than the pope—in fact much less. We all know of his mad intolerance and bigotry whereby Servetus was burnt alive by his orders, for simply dissenting from this murderous autocrat of Geneva.

Fortunately, his bigotry found no foothold in France, and little if any in Germany; but England and Hungary were more ready ground for his melancholy heresy. Two sects were already tearing each other in Great Britain, and now came in the third to cause more bitter division and strife. While Anglicanism was more a matter of discipline and allegiance to Rome, Calvinism attacked the essence and spoke in ecclesiastic language. While the former was a mere schism, the latter taught fatal heresy. Bitter contention arose among Catholics, Anglicans and Calvinists. The Catholics wished to continue their relations to Rome as heretofore; the Anglicans wished to be independent of Rome and acknowledge no authority but the king and parliament as supreme in matters of religion; while the Calvinists would acknowledge neither pope nor parliament in that question. In this struggle it was the Anglicans who suffered and lost most with regard to their wavering religious tenets. The parliament and king, of course, were strong enough to uphold their supremacy as a sort of English “pope,” but dogmatically they slid down to the level of Calvinism; secretly however there were a good number of dissenters, keeping the platform of the

first Anglicans. These are now called the "ritualists" and "Puseyites." Among them to-day there are preachers who, but for the English language, are Roman Catholics in almost every detail; in fact so much so, that they even keep the host or consecrated bread in their houses, as the early Christians did in times of persecution. The other wing of the Anglicans yielded to Calvinism in everything except theory and church government. Almost all dispute between these two parties was on the constitution of the church. A remarkable controversy forsooth! Are the bishops a different order from priests? Just think of it! When they acknowledged no sacraments, priesthood, mass, consecration, transubstantiation, or any other priestly function, still they quarrelled if priesthood and episcopacy were two different orders! The Anglicans were of more aristocratic turn of mind and acquiesced in church management as intrusted to the hands of bishops. The Calvinists were democratic; they rejected bishops, and adopted priests and priestly management of church affairs. Priests, however, in their doctrine, were all Christians without any special order, and priestly management meant popular management, done by election. Among the Calvinists or, as they were afterwards called, Presbyterians, were those who would not yield a hair's breadth for the sake of unity and mutual toleration, who in their blind fanaticism would not put on a colored ribbon or any particle of colored dressing material; would not smile or

indulge in the slightest recreation, in nothing that had the resemblance of gayety; who not only adopted every word of old persecuting Calvin, but even his melancholy, hatred, intolerance and murderous proclivity. They gloried in this insensate fanaticism, claimed to have the *pure* doctrine of Calvin, which meant in their estimation *pure Christianity*, and were styled *Puritans* in England and Huguenots in France. These are the heroes of the "Plymouth Rock," the persecutors of the Baptists and Quakers, and the renowned witch-burners.

Episcopalians and Presbyterians in course of time both had their respective heretics, and these again in their turn were parents of other heretics, till to-day the number of the different heresies amounts to about 185. Think of it!

Neither king nor parliament, naturally, could be a theological authority like the universal church and the pope among Catholics; the consequence was dissension and heresy. From the "high" church emanated "reformed" Episcopalians, and Methodists; these again divided into many sub-divisions. Presbyterians caused and suffered many local divisions and heresies, like Congregationalists, Universalists. Then came the Baptists with their respective sects, divisions and heresies. Unitarians were never considered Christians, although there are very many among them who cling to that name, as it added to their reputation. Their sect is just as old as Christianity, since there were always respect-

able people who refused to believe that a man, real or fictitious, Greek or Jew, ancient or modern could by men of reason be considered God, the creator of the universe. They grew stealthily, like parasites, upon the body of the church (they could not venture stepping forward publicly, for, Christianity, *i. e.* fanaticism, had burnt people for much less "fault" than infidelity), and to-day, as a matter of fact, they outnumber many so-called Christian sects. Unitarians are the farthest outlying posts of Christianity, or even of all positive religions, borders where religion and philosophy meet, where superstition and reason touch; where credulity ends and reasoning begins, where belief sets and experimental knowledge rises. It is the goal toward which all religions tend like the darkness of the night towards dawn. Barbarism, savagery are midnight; religions, like Brahmanism and Catholicism are the small hours; Protestantism is the dawn, Unitarianism is sunrise, Philosophy is daylight. Religion is an appeal to our feelings, Philosophy is an appeal to our understanding. We believe instinctively—we doubt by reason. The higher our intellectual faculties are the least we are led by belief; and the weaker our reasoning power is the more we are governed by religious belief; for Philosophy is the religion of the wise—and religion is the Philosophy of the ignorant. Votaries of the churches to-day mainly consist of women and children and of a class of people who may have amassed fortunes, but are devoid of intellectual attain-

ments. Knowledge is getting diffused and popularized in such a way that a boy to-day of twelve years knows immensely more than any of "God's friends" the "prophets" ever knew; and as knowledge increases credulity decreases. We may rest assured, for example, that whenever the prophet Isaiah, or St. Peter, or St. Augustine, or St. Thomas beheld the rainbow, each one of them believed that God had placed it there to remind the world occasionally of the horrors of the universal deluge. His religion told him so, and he knew no better. Our religion, *i. e.* Philosophy, tells us differently, and we *know* that we are right, because we can prove it at any moment. We are positive that no "God" did ever "put" or "hang" the rainbow up in the clouds, and that it is nothing at all but a pleasant optical display of the refraction of sunlight in the milliards of falling drops of rain. Knowledge thus conquers step by step, demolishes one statement of religion after the other, chases out religion and belief from one field after another, hunts down religion and drives it into a corner; and in course of time religion must yield, lay down her arms, and surrender unconditionally to be entirely displaced by experimental knowledge.

Religious "Reformation," then, is nothing else than gradual decomposition, a slow but steady dissolution of religion. The Protestant sects began by overthrowing the religious authority of church and pope, and installing the Bible as the only authority. Their

next step was to abolish priesthood; this was followed by pulling down the church organization which involved the most cardinal principle, the source of power "from above;" and this resulted in creating religious and political democracy, putting *election* in the place of *nomination*. The popular vote dethroned God; *vox populi* dethroned the Holy Ghost. Priesthood abolished, "Jesus Christ" was banished from cathedrals and temples; these became "meeting houses," and the great mysteries of Christian divine worship, the high and low mass, were degraded to "prayer meetings" and preaching of "gospel truth" and "the word of God." Divine grace was repudiated, and not one of the seven sacraments remained intact. One sect eliminated one, another eliminated another, until none were left. What force or principle was here at work to decompose Christianity? Unbelief. Where there is belief, heresy is impossible. What principle teaches us that the rainbow is but refraction and a reflection of the rays of the sun? That which denies that natural phenomena are merely dead signs and memorials of the mythology of an extremely ignorant and obscure people in a rocky and barren corner of Syria.

Credulity is the mercury in the thermometer of intellectual heat and cold. High credulity, low intelligence; low credulity, high intelligence. A little child believes that its infant brother or sister is a present brought by the doctor or taken out of a cabbage head. A savage will believe that the

white man's wrath is the cause of a lunar eclipse ; a Catholic believes that his God, Rabbi Yeshúa, is hidden, soul and body in a wafer ; a Protestant takes his oath upon the Bible, and believes it to be the very words of God translated and printed in his vernacular. A half experienced young child does not believe in the cabbage story. A common laborer will not believe that any man's wrath has anything to do with an eclipse. A Protestant will not believe that the wafer is, or does contain the body and soul of his God, Rabbi Yeshúa. A freethinker or a radical Unitarian will not believe that Rabbi Yeshúa can be God at all. An atheist does not believe in the existence of any sort of God, human, revealed or otherwise.

Among eastern people circumcision is a sanitary measure from ages immemorial. To impress its extreme importance, Moses, or whoever first organized Jews into society, invented the story that Yehova, the national God, ordered it, and unless every Jew followed it he was liable to be slain. As not even circumcision is a remedy against a number of diseases, bathing and washing was added under threat of severe penalties. Paul was aware of the value and true significance of circumcision, but knew that people, who do not live and dress like Jews, nor is their climate the same as that of Syria, Arabia or other hot countries, could easily get along without that most painful, dangerous, cruel and detestable measure, hence, he abrogated it without any scruple. He was a *disbeliever* in cir-

cumcision, but retained bathing and washing, a most salubrious and wholesome practice, which he enjoined as a sufficient initiation ceremony to his new reformed Judaism. Jews were circumcised anyhow; but he did not care to keep out Romans and Greeks by insisting upon circumcision. It was enough if they took a public bath, while during cold weather, even a symbolical bath was satisfactory for admission to the new heresy. Because water has the power of producing chemical dissolution of sweat and dust or other impurities of our skin, credulity and pious ignorance transferred this attribute of the water into allegory, so as to denote as it were a spiritual washing, whereby moral stains, i. e. *sins*, are washed off. Spiritualizing thus what is material, the new Jewish heresy (Christianity,) received and established its first "sacrament," attributing miraculous powers to it; as if such a bathing or washing effected moral regeneration, converting a criminal into a saint, a sinner into a holy innocent. According to their notions about anthropology, the "first man" fell; all his generations were born in sin, which sin superstition called "original sin," and this original sin, even after "redemption," was to be washed away in water!

A revealed "truth"!

All were born in spite of redemption, for eternal damnation; but this fearful destiny could be cheated by being sprinkled over the head with water, especially if blessed by the priest. Nor could any being

be saved without that water; even children, contaminated already by *original sin*, could not go to "heaven" unless sprinkled with it. Fanaticism reached its zenith by the pious doctrine that the priest was to be summoned to baptize the child the moment of birth if reasonable doubts were entertained about the safe delivery of the infant. It was the priest's duty to be on hand with his soul-saving apparatus when the physicians had extracted the infant from the mother's body far enough to sprinkle holy water upon the head of the infant sufficiently *unwrapped*. Farther fanatics could not go; and reaction appeared a logical necessity. This soon knocked at the door in the shape of a new sect, called *Anabaptists*.

Anabaptists, then, were those who assailed the first sacrament of Christianity. They were the first to *disbelieve* in it as it was, and in consequence they changed it and modified it according to their own fanaticism. No children were to be baptized, and those who went through that ceremony were to undergo it once more in adult age, in order to show that baptism was their own choice and not that of their parents or guardians. Nor was this all. Sprinkling, or applying holy water, just wetting the hair and skin, was not the proper way to administer baptism, for baptism meant bathing, washing, the way Rabbi Yeshúa went into the water,—deep enough probably to be "immersed" in it. This system of baptizing, as used in the old churches, evidently needed

radical reforms. And the Anabaptists did actually show no scruples about it even in our own days. For, as it is well known, if the rage of fanaticism attacks them, they are ever ready to plunge into any river, lake, bay, creek, well or any water hot or frozen, provided there is a hope and chance to perform the ceremony of "immersion!"

Without following all sects one by one in what particular dogma they separated from the mother church and from one another, we can summarily state that not one fundamental principle of Christianity remained unassailed. It can be said with perfect safety, that the essence of Christianity is denied between them all. Protestantism practically is the victory of unbelief over credulity, the victory of reason over superstition, the victory of democracy over autocracy, the vindication of doubt against autocratic dogmatism.

All these achievements owe their origin to those two fortunately mistaken propositions of Luther, that the Bible is the chief authority, and that faith justifies alone.

Now, as to the former proposition, the Protestants had ample time and experience to learn that a dead book cannot be a reliable "supreme authority" in matters of faith and morals, or else there could be no sects. While the Latin and Russo-Greek churches grew to such tremendous expansion and power under autocratic *regime*, the Protestant heresy fell into a hundred and more pieces. This shows conclusively

that papal and Czarial autocracy is a far superior and better authority for Christianity than the "Holy Bible," the "revealed word of God." And again, that Spaniards, Italians, Russo-Greek Russians, and Roumanians on one hand constitute the personification of ignorance, slavery, tyranny and poverty; and heretic France, England, United States, Germany, Switzerland and Holland, with other nations of Germanic blood, embody progress, science, liberty and wealth. If "true religion" involves ignorance, slavery and poverty, Rome and Moscow have it. That it does involve them, is beyond question.

Protestantism is no religion at all; it is only a bridge between religion and atheism. I repeat this, lest Protestants might claim that it was their checkered creeds which created our modern civilization. I know that they claim this actually, and call our civilization unblushingly "Christian civilization," and they appeal to Buckle, Guizot and some other writers from among their own fold. Now, I do not care what one man or another may claim and "prove," they, the Protestants, argue ignorantly and with great injustice. They repeat us a hundred times that Newton, Leibnitz, Kant, Kepler, etc., were Protestants, very pious men; that not one among *our* great men were infidels, etc. If this is

an argument, then, we could continue it: Voltaire, Luther, Galileo, Torricelli, Galvani, Volta, Giordano, Bruno, Columbus, Copernicus, Tycho Brahe, Guttenberg, etc., were Catholics. This sort of "argument" is unworthy for learned and honest men. Newton may have been pious, even fanatic, but the law of gravitation, his great discovery, *is not a Bible revelation*, is not a Christian doctrine. Newton was not inspired by the Bible, but by a dropping apple. Milton *was* inspired by the Bible, as was Dante. Leibnitz was not inspired by the Bible in his hypothesis of the monads, for it is against Mosaic revelation. Kant, Kepler and other great men of Protestant parents did not preach "gospel truth," but on the contrary, solid, materialistic facts. I am sure that Benjamin Franklin did not act "in fear of God" when he invented electric conductors. I am also sure that James Watt was not meditating upon the disciples when he discovered the applicability of steam power. Nor does Edison deduct his principles and inventions from the "Revelation." Charles Darwin may have been a pew-holder and daily attendant in an Episcopal, Presbyterian or Methodist church for all I know, but he did not get his theory from the "gospel according to St. John." On the contrary, the Popes, the inquisitors, the "Defenders of religion," the synods, Swedenborg, John Wesley, John Calvin (the heretic burner), the "Pilgrim Fathers" and countless others *were inspired by the Bible*.

To speak of *Christian* civilization is as insensate as

to speak of a square circle or of wooden iron, or black white. Christianity is the negation of civilization just as much as cold is the negation of heat, darkness of light, hunger of fullness or saturation, bad of good, night of day. Christianity was an immense dam, a mountain thrown across the road of civilization, which obstructed its way, and the human race, or at least the white part of it, had to carve its passage through it like an endless tunnel. Our pick-ax was doubt, our drills were geology, chemistry, astronomy, anatomy, natural and mental philosophy; our dynamite cartridges were experience and knowledge, our lamp was reason. Protestantism assisted us like a timid sister, washing our soiled clothes and attending to our kitchen, while we were at work blasting the entrails of superstition.

“*Quot capita, tot sensus ; quot homines, tot sententia,*” as the Latin saying goes. Bible meant disunion, disharmony, contentions, quarrels and an ever-gushing stream of new creeds, new doctrines, new denials, new heresiarchs and new heresies. Indeed, even within any given sect, there can be hardly found two preachers fully agreeing on every line of their “authority,” unless constrained by their respective church authorities. That “revealed word of God” created the well known “*odium theologicum*,” or “theological hatred,” the bitterest, the most implacable, the most cruel and relentless among all sinful passions, as is seen in its results, culminating in merciless persecutions, heartless tortures and atrocious bloodshed.

Whatever inspiration emanated from the "revealed word of God," it invariably resulted in dogmatism, disagreement, secession, sectarianism, discord, quarrel, persecution, without a single instance of exception to the contrary. There is not one improvement, not one discovery, physical or moral, traceable to the Bible, revelation or preaching. Oppression; stifling of liberal institutions; interference with progress; silencing honest opinion; objecting to scientific investigation; praising as virtue what is no virtue; condemning as vice and crime, what is no vice and no crime; dissolving families, seducing the credulous: these are the results of preaching.

Since the heretics in common call their hundred-fold heresies "Reformation" and their hundred-fold creeds "Reformed religion," it may be fair to ask what "reformation" is, and whether these innumerable "reformers" really did "reform" any religion or any church.

To "reform" means to *form something anew*; i. e. to remodel a thing, or to change a thing into its first or primitive state. Is it this that the reformers have accomplished? Did they reconstruct, remodel the church or the Christian religion? Which age of the church was the model? The apostolic age?—The Nicean age? Which Protestant sect represents either of these ages, the Episcopalians, the Presbyterians, the Baptists, the Methodists, the Adventists, the "New Jerusalem," the Quakers, the Universalists, the Congregationalists, the Lutherans, which?

No ; no reform reached the church from outside. The Latin church is still standing, so is the Russo-Greek without any reform, being in the state into which they developed under their respective circumstances. The reformers reformed nothing, but simply broke their allegiance to the Latin church presided over by the pope. The Germanic, or northern nations separated from the southern, or Latin nations, retaining such chips and fragments of Christianity as were more comfortable and pleasing to their northern taste, fragments without poetry, without enthusiasm, without mysticism, without dreamy inspiration and without the zest of southern imagination. What Reformation retained of Christianity is a dead stuff, dry chips, rude bones without life, without color, without warmth. All that is ideal, sublime, elevating, art-inspiring, poetical, that seizes the heart, they rudely eliminated, banished, smashed, and denounced. No emblems, no imposing ceremonies, pompous divine service, display of majestic solemnity was retained ; no cross, no saints, no statues ; no pictures and other works of art and devotion remained sacred ; no dignified bishops and clergy ; no persons, no places, no vessels, no times were considered holy, awe-inspiring. All and everything became common, cold, dead matter without significance, without halo ; mere flesh, stone, wood, gold, iron, brick and mortar. This vandalism they complacently call "Reformation."

Did they reform hierarchy ? No, they abolished it together with Papacy.

Did they reform the priesthood? No, they abolished it.

Did they reform mass? No, they abolished it.

Did they reform confession? No, they abolished it.

Did they reform the doctrine of indulgences? No, they abolished it.

Did they reform the doctrine of purgatory? No, they abolished it.

Did they reform the doctrine of penance? No, they abolished it.

Did they reform the doctrine of beatification? No, they abolished it.

Did they reform the doctrine of sacramental graces? No, they abolished it.

Did they reform the ways for individual betterment? No, they abolished them.

Did they, then, reform themselves? No, but they are anxious to "reform" Catholics and others.

What, then, was left,—as they reformed nothing? Dead Bible, "Jesus Christ," salvation by faith (without good deeds), absolute predestination (Calvinists and Presbyterians) the preacher, the hell, "New Jerusalem" (kingdom of heaven), baptism, the "Lord's supper" and the Trinity. Nor even these articles are common with all sects, although they are nothing but dry bones after the meat is picked off.

If you ask the preacher why mass was abolished, he will answer because it is not commanded in the Bible. Do not be satisfied with such a silly explanation, but

ask him again, whether that same Bible commands that there must be a steeple, bells, chimes, seats, carpet, furnace, pulpit in the center, with a big "Holy Bible" upon it with a chair for the preacher? Ask him furthermore, if the "Holy Bible" commands that there must be a collection taken up, pew-rent collected? Ask him if the "Holy Bible" commands that the preacher should have a black civil coat, white necktie, or a long, wide robe and surplice above it? Ask him, if the "Holy Bible" commands that just the sort of bread and wine should be used at the "Lord's supper" as that which the preachers offer, or might they use some other quality? Rest assured that the "reformed" service is not commanded by the Bible any more than mass; it is in fact much less.

If the Reformers had the authority to elaborate prayers, abolish mass, and arrange the service as they liked, it was much more in accordance with the power of the mother church to adopt prayers from the Old Testament, to write a "New" Testament (the Bible), to celebrate the "Lord's supper" according to ancient Jewish rite, to adopt candles, which were necessary in the darkness of the catacombs; to use incense, as the air of the catacombs was heavy, being the burial place of the early Christians; to employ special vestments for the occasion, as the Jewish and Roman and all other priests used to; and to retain the cross as an emblem and sign for mutual recognition in secret gatherings during the persecution, and all other rites, every one of which has a painful signifi-

cance attached during the first three hundred years of Christianity. To abolish all this cannot be called *reformation*, but must be regarded as a wrongful *deformation*.

No matter how learned or how ignorant a Protestant may be, he will not fail to blame the Roman mother church for auricular confession. "Oh, I don't believe in such nonsense as confession," they say. "I cannot believe that a man has the power to absolve another from his sins. A priest is a man like any other man. Confession is a political trick of the popes to get information about public opinion, so that he may direct his actions accordingly." On one occasion I was surrounded by a crowd of Protestants on board the "State of Texas," coming back from Florida. None having any idea of who I was, and the conversation being about religion, one of them accosted me to find out what my "religious preferences" were. Truthful to my principles, I answered honestly that I had no religious preferences. What, then, was my religion, or to what church or "denomination" did I belong? Again a thorough negative answer. "Then you must be an infidel!"—exclaimed my Massachusetts-Yankee interlocutor. "Well, if you are an infidel, so much the better; in that case you can express your opinion unbiased. Tell me then, which church, in your opinion, is the best."

"Friend," I answered, "I know of only one church, that is, of one religious body of men, which answers

the description of a 'church,' apostolic, catholic historical, with official language and all minor requirements; and that is the Latin church. The rest are heresies and fragmentary sects."

"That's so. But you see, we Protestants cannot believe in confession. Do you approve of that institution?"

At first I did not care to discuss it, but having noticed the presence of a sour-faced preacher eagerly listening to my discourse, as did others, I gave my friend the following explanation:

"No, neither am I for confession; but my reasons are radical, those, namely, of an agnostic, as you called my indifference. Your Protestant reasons, however, are not well founded, and are but hypocritical. That confession existed among early Christians before the Bible was accepted, we know positively from several sources; but, had it not existed it would have to be invented by the church, since the power of the keys, repeatedly mentioned in the gospels, have rendered it inevitable. The words 'whatsoever ye shall bind,' and 'whatsoever ye shall loose,' imply not only the power of binding and loosing, *i. e.* forgiving or keeping unsolved the sins, but also confession. If the church, is to exercise that power, cannot imagine how the church, or the priest, could or should know *when* to bind or *when* to loose. It is granted among Christians that every man is a sinner, even an infant until baptized; but no sinner can enter heaven, therefore no Christian can enter

heaven. What is that power for then? If all Christians *are* saved, then we can sin as much as we like,—steal, rob, murder; but this is against reason and against natural justice. The middle way is that those who repent, who make restitution, enter heaven; those who persist in sin do not go to heaven. Who will control this? Who has the power? The church by the keys. But now, there must be sins which cannot be forgiven by the priest, for some sins will be *bound*. But how can the priest or the church know these sins, unless the sinner avows, tells, confesses them? Nor can such confession be public, partly to avoid publicity and possible sad consequences, partly because it is nobody's business. No other way remains, than private confession into the ears of the priest. He will absolve the penitents according to the laws of the church, or refuse absolution by the force of the same laws and principles. If crimes are involved, the priest declines to absolve the penitent, not rudely, nor even with any noticeable manner, but charitably, and giving reasonable explanation for the refusal. He appoints another day for a similar interview, and his case is referred to the bishop under a conventional name not that of the penitent whom the priest probably never may have seen before. If his case is reserved to the bishop, the bishop will dictate the penance, or if it be a pontifical case, it must be referred to the pope. There is an opinion among Protestants, that a priest may be permitted to absolve his concu-

bine. This is a grave mistake and a flagrant injustice against the priesthood. A priest is not allowed to absolve any priestly concubine. On the contrary, priest is *ipso facto* suspended if he dared such sacrilege. Not even unknown priestly concubine can be absolved by any priest, provided she accuse herself of such misdemeanor. He will insist with such a female to peremptorily denounce her accomplice to his own bishop under the penalty of refusing absolution. This law must satisfy any scrupulist. Let us now take a practical view of the confession as it is to-day. Of course we must drop as sheer nonsense the talk about politics, opinions and so forth such questions never occur in the confessional. Christians, indeed, are sinners, as the criminal court may witness it abundantly. They lie, deceive, smuggle, steal, rob, murder and commit all imaginable sins and crimes in spite of redemption, sacraments, reformation and all religions. Yet, one or another may feel honestly sorry, for example, of having caused some damage to his neighbor, or for having stolen some goods, money or anything from a person. His conscience will allow him no rest. Confession is no good without restitution; open restitution is unimaginable. How could the penitent go to his neighbor and say: 'I stole such and such a thing from you and now I wish to make a restitution to you.' He would ruin himself, his and his family's reputation and a scandal might be the issue. Now, in such emergency, and it is quite a frequent one, the scrup

ulist will go to confession, make restitution to the priest, the priest absolves him, and the object of restitution is personally delivered to whom it is due, and the secret of it is ever buried with the priest. But even apart from this question, suppose my conscience is not clear, and I know that there is a fellow-man of mine whose business is to clear consciences, provided I intend to atone and better myself, what do I care whether that business be of divine or human, biblical or church origin, so long as it is welcome and profitable to me, and I can relieve my mind lawfully and honestly without any danger or damage to anybody? Why should I thwart and find fault with such an innocent and salubrious institution?"

CHAPTER IV.

NATURE is wonderful.

Nature is more wonderful than miracles.

Facts are more miraculous than miracles of human fiction.

The source of life is heat: the source of heat on our planet is the sun. When the earth dashing through space reaches the point nearest the sun, winter is the result. When its distance from the sun begins to increase, winter recedes, heat increases, spring tepefies the atmosphere, and wakes up slumbering nature to activity as the morning sun awakes slumbering humanity to daily toil.

Are you a friend of nature?

No man can be indifferènt or an enemy to nature and be virtuous.

The greater admirer of nature you are, the saintlier your character, your mind and your heart must be. No admirer, no friend of nature can be wicked. Nothing sanctifies, elevates and ennobles human character more, than the admiration and study of nature and deep contemplation of its works.

Did you ever witness nature's grandeur, when babbling brooklets wind their ways from underneath the snowy cover of the hill, fed by oozing drops of thawing crystals, while the glistening streamlet seeks its

path through stony cataracts to the swelling brook? What are diamonds as compared with the drops wherein the sun bathes its beams? Earth's frosty veil wears away at nature's tepid breath and smiling little germs announce that life is springing forth.

Humming insects, buzzing bees, flies, and worms crawl and creep forth from their cracks and holes, followed by the feathered warblers of the air. The air is balmy, the day is sparkling with life and joy.

Nature builds, nature destroys, nature changes. Nature takes away on one side, replaces it on the other; nature is just, nature is righteous.

Europe was plunged into barbarism by superstition. Europe was enslaved by Latin superstition; Europe was lost by the Latins. Nature repaired the damage; she gave the human race a new world through the instrumentality of Latin oppression and through the instrumentality of a Latin navigator, Christopher Columbus. Through an ignorant religion intellectuality was depressed to an unnatural level, reasoning was silenced, thinking ceased, stupidity dictated miracles, fiction and ignorance held the place of realities. Nature enforced a reaction upon the stupefied human mind, instilling doubt and reluctance to believe absurdities. The upward striving reason shattered the disgraceful structure and tissue of miracles by discovering palpable facts more miraculous than all the fragments. Such were the magnifying glass, gunpowder, the art of printing, the new world, the new astronomy, etc. Superstition

enslaved the nations; it reduced them to beggary and kept them in abject ignorance. Nature secretly worked great miracles, kept hidden great natural forces, great gifts, stored up wealth, prosperity, freedom; held in storage a great social, political and intellectual renovation. Nature awakened self-respect, ambition, self-consciousness, love of learning, love of freedom; inflamed courage, enterprise and self-reliance in human bosoms, for great was the work of regeneration; it was to cost blood, the lives of hundreds of thousands of human beings. Nature's plans and works were great, much greater than human mind could have anticipated or projected. Northern nations were to be emancipated from the thralldom of Judeo-Italian superstition. The seats of nations were to be changed. Power, wealth, knowledge were to be increased, and taken away from the south to adorn and elevate the north. Nature's further plans were to people her new world, to show the emancipated and regenerated nations where to lay the foundations for a new, politically, morally, mentally free and independent society which should be an immense reservoir for all nations and individuals willing and able to crush the shackles of religious and political servitude. A task worthy of Nature, worthy of heroes.

Northern, or Germanic nations had to cease being tributaries to Jewish-Latin superstition and religious autocracy. They were to become the masters of the globe, its military, political, social, commercial, finan-

cial, industrial, agricultural, scientific, intellectual and moral dictators; while the "true religionist" Latins and southerners could cling to their "representative of God on earth," now confined to the Vatican alone, and be slaves, ignorant and beggars upon the highways and at the doors of the heretical nations.

But how was this fairy dream to be realized and the stupendous work to be achieved? Where were the material, the tools, the workers, the drawn up plan?

All was ready in Nature's economical laws.

A monk was to step forward and rip open the veil of the cobweb covered "sanctuary."

The monk had to overthrow religious authority.

The monk had to crush religion by abolishing its superstitious sacraments.

The monk, for lack of Philosophy, had to reduce religion to simple "faith."

The monk had to proclaim national self-consciousness.

Thus the monk made the split, and now North and South stood face to face.

Hundreds of thousands shed their blood, but superstition was left on the ground, and the banner of intellectual freedom was raised in triumph.

The monk opened a new source of workers and tools; he threw open the gates of monasteries and nunneries, seminaries and of episcopal courts. Thousands upon thousands of priests, monks, theologians,

lay-brothers and nuns were set free; they founded families, created homes, made careers; became citizens, adding hundreds of thousands of useful men to the society of the North, filling vocations in agricultural, industrial, professional and literary circles. Being the children of educated parents, they were a most desirable addition to the society from which their parents were ostracised. Many of them became scientists, preachers and great authors, inventors and philosophers. The many thousands slain in battles were thus replaced by a choice set of native citizens without admixing foreign, unpatriotic elements; while the estates of monasteries, abbacies, bishoprics and other dead establishments reimbursed the treasury for the loss and financial costs of the war.

Nor is this all. The loss of blood found an abundant recompensation in the abolition of sacerdotal celibacy, the establishment of religious freedom, which widened the lungs of the northern nations—so to speak—to such an extent, that free breathing regenerated the North in precisely the same ratio as it caused a shrinkage in the South. Whatever southern idea reached the North it found thinkers, who instantaneously developed it and converted it to practical use. The inventions of Torricelli, Volta, Galvani resulted in telegraphy, in practical galvanism, in electric motors, electric lights, the phonograph, the telephone and innumerable inventions and discoveries. The aspirations of scientific men found an illimited field, free of obstruction for

research, while Bible students created a stupendous Hebrew learning and literature.

Jews were in hot water for their Talmud, and their most deadly enemy was the great Eisenmenger, professor of Hebrew at Heidelberg. This scholar spent his entire life in one great work, in one ideal, to unearth the secret doctrines and teachings of the Jews against Christendom, religion, state and society. He spent forty years and all his means for this one work. After such exertions, such learning, such perseverance and self-sacrifice, the work was ready for publication ; but the Jews got wind of it and made stupendous efforts, racing around, denouncing, calumniating the author, petitioning the King of Prussia against the work, so that the author could find no publisher in the whole German empire. Disappointments, even privation, a result of his noble self-sacrifice, disheartened him, till his worriment killed him, leaving his wife penniless. Finally Frederick the Great, learning of the sad case of the learned man, took the manuscript, called learned professors and Jewish rabbis to examine the work and show if his quotations from the Talmud and other Jewish books were correct or otherwise. They reported that all was correct, the work contained no calumnies, no lies, no fiction ; still the Jews beseeched the great monarch not to allow the publication of the work for fear that the people might uprising against them and cause a bloody persecution of the Jews. Yet, on the other hand there was the poor widow

of the unfortunate scholar,—Frederick felt embarrassed. Certainly he wished to see no bloodshed and revolt against these usurers; he could not very well lend his own name as publisher. He was to do what was right and no injustice to either party. He ordered his court printer to set in type and print the book secretly, and the title page must bear “Königsberg” instead of “Berlin.”

The book consisted of two quarto volumes, over 700 pages each. Few people can realize the immensity of the labor it required to amass such an incredible amount of material of Hebrew quotations in original and German translation; nor can any man form an adequate idea of the astonishing statements and devilish charges the eminent scholar arrayed in these two volumes against Jews from their own books and doctrines. The works caused a tremendous sensation in the whole literary world. In a very short time the first edition disappeared, to be followed by a second, a third and several others, of which the Jews bought up as many as they could and burnt them. “Old Fritz” laughed in his sleeves. The poor widow was earning a very respectable revenue from her poor, unfortunate husband’s literary labors.

Classicism and Orientalism after this soon declined in Germany to make place for philosophy. In England belles-lettres and philosophy began to flourish. The fact is, that Classicism never flourished in England; the English never knew decent Latin, England never produced classical scholars of any

prominence; and the gibberish they call Latin, the devil himself cannot understand. They took early to the development of their vernacular as did the Germans, French, Hollanders, except Hungary, where Latin kept its predominance until 1834. England produced her two greatest authors, Shakespeare and Milton, but the tendency was for earnest thinking, in which field England started well with Francis Bacon, Locke, Hume, Gibbon, and several philosophers and critical historians.

Holland displayed the finest show, we might say, among all nations. She had great classical scholars like Erasmus, orientalists like L'Empereur, theologians like Grotius, philosophers like Spinoza, and world-renowned painters and navigators.

France in her turn was civilizing the world with Molière, Racine and her brilliant court of Louis XIV. After that, however, the French also took to philosophy and scientific investigations and discoveries.

The northern nations in their new, bright atmosphere, after stopping blood and money tribute to the southern Moloch, began to fatten, grow strong, send out colonies, people the oceans with merchant and war-vessels, and still the mother country was not suffering for lack of population. Undoubtedly it was a clever and provident policy to emancipate the papal slaves and create so many new citizens and homes. The result was visible in less than two centuries. What if we compare the Germanic nations to-day with the Latins? France, the fore-

most Catholic (Latin) country with her 38,000,000, adding Belgium, Portugal, and even Spain with 16,000,000, will not cover Germany with the additional Germans of Austria, Switzerland and Russia. The Catholics of Italy, Hungary and Poland can be covered by England, Holland, Denmark, and Sweden. South America's Catholics are covered by the United States, and British America. The other smaller Catholic or Latin colonies are abundantly covered by Australia, India and the islands.

Who would have dreamt of such an enormous change of affairs in the times of Dr. Martin Luther?

What if instead of this rough statistical comparison we take under consideration the intellectual superiority, political might, military, financial, industrial, commercial power and wealth of the northern nations?

France realizes keenly the curse of celibacy in her clergy and the tendency of the nation toward wild, licentious, unmarried life. She tries her best to stamp out the evil by legislative enactments, but the population being Catholic and the clergy not loud enough concerning the question, legislation cannot enforce marriage upon the clergy.

Italy is well peopled, comparatively speaking, in spite of the tendency to celibate life and the unmarried state of her clergy. This prolific fertility of the Italians, however, reminds us of the fertility of rats. Besides, the hot climate helps as much to productiveness as does lazy, indolent life, without

emphasizing the general bastardy as a result of voluntary and compulsory celibacy.

The Spaniards have reached the point of stagnation already, and there is no resurrection for that forlorn nation. Spaniards are the race of mystics, monks, Jesuits and beggars, an outworn, decrepit people, shiftless, indolent and fanatical. It was always the foreigners, the Moors, the Goths, the French and others that kept that nation alive in the past. No inventors, discoverers, philosophers ever issued from under her orange groves, but only ignorant theologians and mystical maniacs.

Having abolished clerical celibacy, Luther created a new, modern society, heretofore not adequately appreciated. Protestant writers themselves seem to fail to grasp the full significance and regenerating power mysteriously hidden in that new institution, at least new in its application, and only perceptible for philosophical eyes.

What the church calls "apostolic succession" had to be necessarily abandoned from the fact that the Reformers appointed others than ordained priests to preach secession from the mother church. True, later on, they counted several Latin bishops among their ranks, who could illegally but still validly ordain priests. However, the order, as a sacrament being abolished, the Protestants, except the Anglicans, never cared to claim "apostolic succession." The act of ordaining a priest involves a great, a highly important principle beyond its religious char-

acter ; as no ordained priest has power and authority to function unless he receives *appointment*. Bishops and all other ecclesiastics are subject to the same governing principle, except the pope. All hierarchical degrees are conferred by ordination, consecration and appointment from above, the only exception being monastic dignities and positions, where *election* is the means. All else was based upon the axiom "all power from above." Reformation did not assail the *principle*, but annulled it by practice under the existing circumstances. With Papacy denied, holy orders abolished, priesthood became an impossibility, and nomination had to cease owing to the overthrow of authority. No order, no priest; no pope, no delegated power ; its place must be taken by *election*.

Thus the more civilized, the more just (at least in principle) *election*, or elective system was enthroned in Europe over religious matters, the first time in history. Elective system is the mother of the *representative* system, that is, the foundation of our modern constitutional system of government. Priesthood was a delegated nobility ; a privileged caste, endowed with dignities, privileges, standing and livelihood for the services and the self-sacrifice of a celibate life that each priest undertook. People were disbarred, locked out and completely robbed of all rights, all chances to advance and to ameliorate their state. Reformation created a powerful, thorough going democracy, in religious matters first ; but it was

bound to overthrow nobility and privileges, even empires and kingdoms in due course of time. This institution reached its climax in the foundation of a grand republic in the new world, the cradle of a new, future society. Thus the civilized part of human society can elect no more kings, establish no more empires ; for retrogradation in nature, where evolution is the law, is abnormal.

Who would dare say that all these stupendous consequences and results were premeditated by the Reformers? No one. Natural laws are the secret agencies to which these great changes for the better must be ascribed. Evolution, and the law of movement toward the least resistance are the latent forces, of which we spoke in our first chapter.

That same principle of elective system buried "divine authority," buried the "special divine grace" and created a new source of power and authority, that of the "sovereign people," heretofore the despised, down-trodden outcasts. In the eyes of a philosopher this meant nothing less than the fundamental subversion and utter demolition of Christianity by its very roots and theocratic ground-principles, and a general return to the age of reason upon which heathen Greeks and heathen Romans founded their world-conquering republics. The philosopher knows well that Christianity and Republicanism are two diametrically opposite principles. *Christianity* means *theocracy*, *Republicanism* means *democracy*, i.e. Christianity is autocratic, where *God* is the king or

his vicar governs as an autocrat, (like a pope, a sultan or a czar); while Republicanism is a popular government, a government by the people without kings, emperors, nobles, dukes, lords, counts, bishops and popes. Republicanism is the reverse of Christianity; it is the very negation of Christianity and its practical abolition. A Christian republic is a contradiction; but Christian communism, Christian family, Christian theocracy are the possibilities. The primitive Christians were communists; the first Christian associations were but families, under the fatherly management of a bishop, a sort of patriarchal rule; but late Christianity was, and is still, aiming at theocracy such as the Puritans sought to establish in Massachusetts, and such as the popes were, and are still, seeking to establish through the whole Christian world.

People thought about these questions in later years, when the religious wars subsided. Not as if the same thoughts never had entered human brains before, but Christianity was like a boa constrictor coiled and twined around state, society, and free thought, making it impossible for men to think and speak, until Protestantism flung off papal autocracy, that pestiferous snake from the neck of thinkers. New sciences sprung up in consequence, one of them being called *Political Economy*, and the other *Sociology*. About one hundred years ago the discussion of social questions by the French philosophers and thinkers led to the most bloody revolu-

tion on record, one which cost the lives of legions of priests, monks and nobles, and the heads of a king, a queen and other dignitaries. These same social questions created French communism, German socialism, international anarchism and Russian nihilism.

Leaving aside these extremes we must acknowledge the progress we are making toward the path of Philosophy. We commence to take up the thread and continue Plato's, Epicurus', Democritus' work, where intruding Christianity interrupted it. Our forefathers laid down a solid foundation for a Republic, which *Christians* never could, or would, have done, thus opening the way for free and honest philosophical discussion, so much opposed and suppressed by Christians in all centuries and all countries.

Religious matters in the north underwent a radical change. The position of priests has been exalted high above that of common mortals. A priest was, and is claimed to-day, to perform miracles, nay, to do more than all the angels could perform; they changed common bread into the body and soul of Jesus. Such a supernatural or miraculous power could not be conferred upon a man by another man; it was God's immediate gift through the sacrament of holy order. Church doctrines, religion and morality as well as salvation and the work of redemption were all God's works through his son Rabbi Yeshúa, conveyed to the Church by the Holy

Ghost. All these came from above and were handed down by the Church to the priests, who, in their turn, dispensed the great mysteries and graces to the faithful by preaching and administering the sacraments. Mass was no ceremony, nor a simple rite or external worship, but a real re-enactment of the great sacrifice of the Calvary without blood. All these were mysteries, supernatural communications between heaven and redeemed mankind.

Protestantism rushed in, overturned the altar, swept away all the mysteries, all sacraments, symbolical mediums of divine grace; relations between God and men were interrupted, mediators ejected; the bloodless mystic sacrifice abolished. Henceforth "church" meant a congregation of a town or village; sacrifice was replaced by "Lord's supper," a mere rite of commemoration without mysteries. No more religion, piety and doctrines came down from above through the Holy Ghost, for the church was the congregation, which was not inspired, nor had the mission of teaching the whole human race; the function of ministry was lowered to Bible-expounding according to the wishes and caprice of the respective sects. Priesthood was degraded to a simple preaching profession, losing its high standing, its mission, its sanctity, its independence. Preachers stepped into the place of priests, elected, not sent, commissioned like a military officer or civil official, without sacramental grace, without spiritual powers and without divine mission.

Such was the origin and birth of the preacher.

What, then, is a preacher?

A preacher is a public servant in the employment of a religious community, to perform duties, as prescribed by the community.

It is a radically new departure from the traditional relation between the teaching and learning church. Sentimentalism, idealism and spiritualism are displaced by cold realism on business principles. Life became a reality, existence an aim in itself. Man lived heretofore in this "wicked world," in this "earthly wandering" only on trial, a state of transition, in which he had to prepare himself for a future life, the *true one*, an everlasting one, and his only object in life was to be on a perpetual war path with the "flesh," with "temptations," with the devil, whose conquest meant salvation, and to be his victim meant eternal perdition. The body was but a prison of the soul, a natural enemy to sanctity and salvation; its wants and indigences were frowned at, were despised; the soul being God's image, it chiefly was to be taken care of. Bodily wants were secondary questions; the learning church had to provide for it, while the teaching church and her authorities husbanded and distributed the same as accessories, dependencies unworthy to be talked about for a spiritual man.

Protestantism thought and taught differently. Body, bodily wants were realities, tangible, cold facts; soul, spirit, spiritualism, were, well—good

enough, but still,—who knows? A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush. Preachers actually became nothing more than a necessary evil. Materialism dethroned spiritualism, body conquered the soul, the care of the body was declared supreme. Protestants proposed to *live* well, rather than to *die* well; this earthly life is a certainty, a future one is, at the least, problematical. A parish, a parsonage or a benefice is a sure thing without inspiration, mystery and supernaturalism, a throne, a crown, a realm in heaven is too spiritual, too abstract a thing for a matter of fact northerner. He is willing to grant a benefice to a spiritual man; but if he is to pay, he wants the right to dictate just such a spiritualism as his tastes may demand, and no more. He pays the spiritual man who must do just such a work as demanded or none at all. The Protestant is the employer, the preacher is the employee, a simple minister, a servant.

His religion is simple, but he must contradict, denounce and deny the Catholic church.

Salvation is to join the sect, frequent the prayer-meetings, and pay pew-rent.

Dogma is but one: “faith,” *i. e.* believe ye!

Since every Christian has the right to consult the supreme authority of faith and morals, and is also entitled to expound it according to his own taste and level of understanding, every Protestant is a preacher for himself and a doctor of his own theology without special qualification. Among many sects even more

is claimed; namely, the Holy Ghost inspires the believers themselves individually and separately, and women from the kitchen or nursery, piano or dress-making are quite as proficient inspired preachers (and practice the art publicly!) as any Protestant D. D. or any "bishop." Circumstances being such as we state, it is manifest that the preacher is no more an ecclesiastic person than a sexton or even a midwife. Nor does a preacher enjoy a greater authority than they. His standing is not independent of the congregation but subordinate, whence it follows that he can have no idea of his own, but is bound to flatter the whims of ignorant elders, praise people and their actions where an earnest warning, reproach or possibly a serious rebuke were quite in place. In many cases a single old woman is "boss" of the whole congregation and the poor preacher is expected, sometimes morally compelled, to eulogize, or make endless and tasteless panegyrics for such venerable old ladies, the pillars of the congregation. His vocation does not imply any special divine grace, nor does his profession separate him from the common members of the community. His person is not exalted, does not presuppose sanctity and special virtue of either self-abnegation or exceptional purity of life. Consequently there is no reason why he should be more continent than others or more exemplary than others.

Protestantism made a thoroughly clean sweep of all ghostly purities, sanctities and mysteries. By

having abrogated all spirituality in religion and worship, celibate "purity" dropped to the ground to the great honor of the human reason and human dignity as vindicated by Protestantism. Shall we praise Protestants for this step? Shall we adduce the claims of reason in the defence of Reformation? No, the matter is self-evident, so loud-crying, that the Reformers could not help pulling down that godless, rotten and infamous institution, a veritable nest of the devil. Even if the Reformers had not been driven to that step by the circumstances they created by their oppositions, it ought to have been their most sacred duty to emancipate themselves and all rational beings from that nefarious snare. Still, Protestants deserve credit for this well-meant, successful and honest task of calling back human reason to its normal course from the lost path of extravagance whither it had been guided by dreaming idiots and criminal blasphemers. They took the common sense view of the question, and, instead of going to the trouble of lengthy consultation, theological and moral hair-splittings, they abolished and swept away monasticism altogether, declared the religious vows of the monks and nuns null and void; declared clerical celibacy an outrage upon human and natural rights, and made their preachers or ministers marry according to reason and natural laws.

We know not if the reader can at once realize the far-reaching significance of this step. It is not so much the concrete fact of the preacher-marriage

that gives importance to this radical measure, as the high principles involved therein. It profoundly modified people's ideas of "purity," "continence," virginity and marriage, of the relation of the sexes and the whole system built thereupon as bearing upon the future state of the society. In this respect we must blame the Reformers for not having carried through this part of the reforms to its real end, but stopping short, and the preachers in their utter ignorance are still maintaining ideas, clinging to traditional notions of the old church and her superstition in details, rendering these details and particulars inconsistent with the great scope of this mighty reformation. We must venture a few remarks upon this point.

Let Protestants consider this:

The idea of the old church was, and is still, the following: The male and female sexes are two different things. As the body, its limbs, the whole organism are but ashes and mud, only formed for the sake and use of the soul; as the entire material universe is but transitory, mainly existing for the sake of our earth; the earth being the centre of the world (creation); the sun, moon and stars merely to give light, the animal, vegetable and mineral kingdoms only to serve man; and man is on earth on trial, on a short pilgrimage to earn eternal bliss or eternal hell if he be wicked; work, food, clothing, all bodily needs and instincts, as that of self-support and self-reproduction are subordi-

nate, even despicable "passions." All delights of life are contemptible, unworthy and sinful, because they distract the mind, and carry away man from his ultimate destination, eternal happiness. Our instinct of reproduction is by all means the most violent and the hardest to combat, therefore the most "wicked" and "sinful." Still, unless the sexes perform their natural functions, the race could not continue; hence, offspring is begotten in sin, and sin continues by heredity. The female sex weaker than the male, is an easier prey of sin and the devil than is the stronger male sex. Adam, the first man, fell a victim of female intrigue; Solomon, the wisest of mortals, alike with his father, fell in a similar manner, and thousands of holy men were beguiled from the thorny path of "purity" by female wickedness,—the female was justly regarded (by the philosophy of the church) a Satan, whose sex is the ruin of the human race, and hence the real murderer of Jesus Christ, therefore accursed forever. How could holy men, hermits, monks and priests marry under such circumstances? The priest had to touch the blessed sacrament every day in his life, how could he, pray, contaminate, defile and pollute his sacred self by the touch of a female?

What could be more natural under such sad circumstances than to try to "*flectere superos et Acheronta*—" move heaven and hell—to separate the sexes; to compel them to passivity, to denounce them, and hold out all imaginable inducements in this life and

in the "hereafter" to those who would abjure their sex? Virginity was held up as the ideal state, especially for the dangerous female. The church could not very well exclude or altogether excommunicate the female, as the human race could not be propagated without her, so the church sought to do the next best, to send as many females into nunneries as she possibly could, and tolerate wickedness in the shape of marriage. Marriage—in the eyes of the church—was legitimate and honorable for laymen, for sinners; but utterly incompatible with sanctity. Unfortunately for the church, the gospels are rather indiscreet about Rabbi Yeshúa's parentage, especially concerning "father" and "mother," not to mention his "brothers and sisters," and what is worse, they tell us of the condition of the mother before marriage, and of the angel's visit to her. A mother is a mother regardless of church opinions. The church blushed at the thought that her God was born of a female! If it is sin to touch a woman, if it is impurity and sin to be conceived, or to conceive, the present case is a striking contradiction and denial of the law of the church. She had the authority, she could dictate what she pleased. Hence the well-known theory by which his brothers and sisters are flatly denied; the father, as such, repudiated, the mother declared *virgin*, the conception attributed to an abstract, incorporeal being (God,) and the "sin" was declared "off." A few years ago the church stepped forward uncalled and exposed herself to rid-

icule by means of an additional dogma, called the "Immaculate Conception," in which she further declared that the conception also of Rabbi Yeshúa's mother was sinless, that is to say, Maria was not conceived in sin, but she was exempt on account of the great sanctity of her holy motherhood. Under convincing evidences against herself, the church hatched up a new marriage to suit her own taste, a marriage in which the male and female merely live together like brother and sister, as is proved by the example of Joseph and Mary and by numerous other married saints. Thus the church drove herself to absurdity, a highly deserved but extremely discreditable position for such a dignified and presumptuous body.

Absurd theory! tyrannical in its application, disgraceful and immoral in its consequences, yet none the less consistent and logical as a conclusion to the premises. If creation be true, if Adam and Eve are realities; if child-bearing be a punishment of God; if there be a soul and the whole world exists merely for its benefit and accommodation; if there is redemption, original sin, a saviour, impurity, sin and all accessories, then marriage is certainly a crime, sexual intercourse an abomination, and sex is not only useless but a demon of perdition for the human race; mankind ought to abstain from marriage, retire into monasteries and convents and await death in utter self-mortification. They ought to stop mining, navigation, factories, industries of all kinds, agriculture, commerce, banking and all business: and to

prepare for death and the last judgment. This is consistent in every particular.

What is now the stand-point of the Reformers? Is it as consistent as the theory of the Roman Church? No.—The Reformers did not dare carry through their work systematically and it abounds in inconsistency and contradiction.

According to reformed doctrines Adam's marriage *was* a sin; he disobeyed God. There *is* original sin, otherwise no redemption were possible; that is, Christians could not claim that Rabbi Yeshúa was God, descended from heaven to die for man and save man from eternal damnation. Eve *did* seduce Adam; the female sex *is* the cause of hell and of the death of Rabbi Yeshúa. The female sex *is* the devil's snare; women *do* tempt men; women *do* enter into intrigues with the devil; they *do* become witches, and Protestants certainly did burn women on the stake for witchcraft. Protestants *did* and *do* denounce "flesh," "lust," "concupiscence;" they *did* forbid a husband from kissing his wife on the "Lord's day." Protestants *do* praise virginity and extol it, as does the Roman Church. Yet Protestants demolished convents, expelled nuns, abrogated celibacy and monachism, and made their preachers marry; that is, virginity and continence were held up by Protestants, but their practical application in life they not only denounced, but discouraged, and approved of the opposite, of the wicked incontinence, of the loss of virginity and of the propagation of the original sin

by the marriage of their preachers. By this act they declared that marriage was no impurity, nor was the loss of virginity and innocence any sin by legal marriage. But this doctrine reflects upon Rabbi Yeshúa and his parentage. Here is a great inconsistency. If Maria *had* remained virgin *and* mother, motherhood is eclipsed by virginity; and this latter state being superior, and in fact, the only state of perfection, they do a wrongful, even an immoral act when they abolish and discourage nunneries, discountenance celibacy, and do not require their ministers to emulate a higher degree of perfection than married state. If virginity, continence and celibacy are in moral life a greater perfection than incontinence, the loss of virginity and the married state, how is it that not one Protestant man or woman strives to attain that high degree of sanctity, but continues to sin, diffuse original sin in all parts of the world, compel priests, nuns and monks to abandon that elevated ground of morality and purity, and not insist that at least their preachers should strive to attain it?

Moreover, Protestants declared the marriage ties dissoluble in direct violation of the "Lord's" injunction "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." They have decreed that a divorced woman is marriageable, in direct opposition to another injunction of the "Lord," ". . . and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery." By these bold measures Protestants crushed

even the last crust of what was called "sexual purity," and made themselves masters and autocrats of morality, heedless of the "revealed word of God," heedless of the old church, heedless of the premises of their own religion. More than this; they opened a wide gate to procuration of all sorts of vice-mongers.

Protestants can therefore marry and remarry any number of times, preachers included, wherever there is any true or fictitious (not to speak of hired) adultery that can be proved. Shall we speak of other degradations of the female sex, the victim of Protestant "Reformation" and Catholic "virgin chastity"? No. We reserve this very grave question for another book, in which we propose to show the female sex, most zealous supporters of Preacherdom and priesthood, and how both Catholic and Protestant Christianity degraded her.

Why did not Protestants carry out their work of reformation in a preconceived and systematic manner? Why did they not repudiate the ignorant theories of wild fancy, as if the human race had been ruined by a woman, or as if the natural and rightful intercourse of the sexes were not an indifferent action of no more moral consequence or significance than any other instinct? Infidels and atheists took a more direct, more decent, more just and reasonable step by declaring marriage a simple social contract under positive, man-made laws, without a spark of supernaturalism, spiritualism, moralism or religionism

about it. This is a principle with ample room for improvement; and if it did not yet attain a satisfactory degree of perfection, the fault is with Christian stubbornness and hypocritical "purism."

Protestantism alone is responsible for the crowded courts, where male and female petitioners enact scenes never in the world's history witnessed, never dreamt of. Protestantism alone is responsible for the abominable scandals displayed publicly in courts and in daily newspapers; lively matrimonial scandals discussed in public and private family-circles by married as well as youthful people, disseminating slackness, demoralization and vice. Protestantism is solely responsible for the audacity, boldness and blushless impudence of the female, by which husbands are actually terrorized, pulled and driven into marriage, vice and an hundred different qualities of crime. Protestantism solely is responsible for thousands of unhappy marriages, litigations, home-rows, the consequences of rash or wild marriages. Protestantism did not regulate the relations of the sexes to each other as did the old church, but simply denied and abrogated her old, time-sanctioned institutions concerning marriage as much as other points heretofore touched upon. To hold fast to moldy biblical nonsense on one hand, allow innovations in the spirit of progress, abolish idealism and restraint without any safeguards, substituting hypocrisy for scruples; this is Protestantism summed up.

Yet, Protestants claim that they civilized, ennobled

society, elevated the female and cultivated the masses. Not a word is true of these bold claims. Unbelief emancipated man. Protestantism was tolerated as a religious cloak, for infidelity was denounced and shunned by all until recently, and the compromise between unbelief and religion brought about a common acquiescence in hypocrisy. Under the sway of this Protestant-infidel-hypocrisy honest virtue was superseded by a new, hypocritical virtue, called "decency" and "decorum," by which the "individual" (meaning *indivisible*) got split, as it were, in twain, having two faces, two characters, two natures, two moralities or even as many as circumstances may call for. Men and women become one thing in private, another thing in the "dining-room," another thing in the "parlor," another thing in the street, still another in business. Old fashioned "my wife" became Mrs. Jones; old fashioned "woman" became "lady;" old fashioned "girl" became "young lady;" every loafer, became "gentleman." False hair, false teeth, false eyes, false jewels, false feelings, false affections, false virtue, false purity, false speech, false decency, false elegance, false dwellings, false business, false religion, false titles are the natural consequences of this hypocritical Reformation.

You see "gentlemen" with tooth-picks in the mouth loafing around the streets displaying Protestant decency. The same "gentleman" will wash and brush himself before entering the "dining-hall"

and will sit there very stiff, feasting on roast and potatoes, but not a drop of wine or beer would be brought to the table, for it might desecrate the "hall." Feasting done, the "gentleman" who would not desecrate the "hall" with a glass of wine, will turn around and find the "saloon" (properly *salon*, but hypocritically the beer and whiskey-shop is meant by it), where he will "indulge in" (hypocritically for swill) "drink," till he gets "intoxicated" (hypocritically speaking, properly beastly drunk). The same "gentleman" upon reaching home attacks the "lady" before whom you must stand up in a public car unless you want to be considered a brute by all "ladies and gentlemen" present, and after "abusing" her (hypocritical, for kicking and beating) he "retires" (hypocritically, for staggering) to his "apartment" (hypocritically speaking, meaning a narrow, dark hole, usually in a flat).

Men worship women publicly; buy and sell them, beat and shoot them privately. Legions of detectives and policemen are kept day and night to hunt down dishonest, *i. e.* publicly dishonest "ladies and gentlemen." Penitentiaries, prisons, jails and station-houses are packed with "ladies and gentlemen."

In view of all these things preachers are not only powerless to bring about honesty, sincerity and true civilization, but are blind and promoters of hypocrisy in addition. On account of their dependency on the congregation for bread and butter, the preachers must be pliable. How modestly do they remind their

flocks of debts and arrears ! What a servile crawling at the feet of the "elders" ! The preacher is nothing but a hired talking-machine, to be wound up by the congregation, to rattle down "sermons" about "faith" and Bible year in year out, without a thought of his own, without a novel idea, thrashing up and down the same old rotten chaff of faith, salvation of soul, of Bible, of attacks upon the old church, of hell, of "righteousness" and "Jesus." What a pitiable drudgery ! He is not independent enough, even if he knew better, to grab the pruning knife and undertake a thorough "reformation ;" he must look out for his own and his family's interests.

Yet if I were asked to compare the preacher to the priest and give my honest opinion as to which state is better, as far as the man himself is concerned, I would say that, in spite of all drawbacks of preacherdom the preacher is preferable to the priest. Priestly drudgery is a slave's drudgery, for he is spied and dogged by all, Catholic or Protestant alike. True, if a little prudent, the priest enjoys an unlimited trust, confidence, authority and influence with his people ; his communicants have no secrets before him ; their houses are open to him day and night ; he is at home on the whole earth, especially if a monk. He can go from Rome to China ; wherever Catholics can be found he is welcome ; he can celebrate everywhere on earth, for the official language is the Latin and he knows his liturgy. These advantages are not offered to preachers ; for if the preacher

leaves his country, his business is lost. Being a married man, he is not entrusted with confidential affairs, nor is his advice sought in private matters, lest his wife might find out a word; he is more of a public servant than the priest. Even the very faces, if equally shaven, will show which is the priest and which the preacher, regardless of national or racial differences. The preacher is invariably care-worn, sourfaced and bent. The priest, if not the round-faced jovial type, has the sharp, thoughtful mien of a thinker or that of a sufferer. The most radical difference, however, between them is in marriage. Here the preacher has the advantage. It makes of him a *man*, while the priest is a eunuch; it makes a preacher a solid householder, while the priest is a useless parrot for ornament in a cage. It renders the preacher a serious, a matter-of-fact, practical man, while the priest is an inexperienced, hearsay, idle talker. The preacher has a home, no matter if it is but a garret, still it makes of him a man, a father of family, a husband, who knows what life's miseries, indigencies and cares are; who knows what fatherly and wifely affections are; who is acquainted with all miseries and, possibly, pleasures and happiness of human life. The priest may dwell in marble palaces, surrounded with all honors, riches, servants, libraries, collections, all the fineries of Paris and of the world, still he is hollow, empty, homeless; his palace is but a comfortable barrack; his riches dead stuff, useless to him; his library is a silent, dead

oracle, life to him is a calendar of the breviary, weary, yawning idleness ; a prison, a dark death-chamber without the flutter of stirring life, without the gay chatter of "dear ones." Life is as cold within as are the marble slabs and blocks without. Even the pope himself is nothing but an old, decrepit eunuch kept in golden cage in golden chains, unable to leave children (legitimate) behind him.

CHAPTER V.

NEARLY all that man does in this world has the sole object to avert evil from himself, and to go through life as comfortably as he possibly can.

All human institutions, as State, Legislature, religion, school, arts, industry, work and all steps and movements that man has ever undertaken, are directed towards the same end.

In ancient times, when people dwelt in caves, huts and tents, enduring direful discomforts, wants and miseries, their principal enemies were the elements, the seasons; their greatest friend was the sun. Life was but an eternal struggle with natural forces, against which they were absolutely powerless; nor could they elude harsh north winds, frost, snow and rain except by inventiveness and crafty devices, such as building huts, or heaping up stones with a cavity inside for refuge.

What could these poor, ignorant human beings do when they felt the mighty pressure of the wind; when heavy clouds spread out over their heads, concealing the sun, and awe-inspiring flashes of lightning darted through the clouds accompanied by roaring thunder-claps, as if the world were crashing down to destruction? The rain pouring down in cataracts, demolished and washed away huts and

tents. Fields and meadows were turned into lakes, the pastures resembled rivers, sheep and cattle took to the mountains, or were drowned. In course of time the waters disappeared. The days became shorter. Heavy gray clouds roll up from the horizon and cold white little flakes darken the air so densely, that not a blade of grass could escape being covered with it. By next sunrise the poor savage cannot leave his hut; the air is bright and clear but so biting, that the naked body loses all feeling; therefore refuge must be sought, the body must be covered with something, and fire must be started in the hut or cavern. The sun is shining, is lovely, is so friendly, so kind; yet not exactly as propitious as in other times, when insects buzz in the air, flowers bloom in the field, trees are dressed in their green garments.

Surely the poor man must have thought, as even little children do think, about these great phenomena of nature. Surely he must have put the question to himself: Whence does all this come from? Certainly from above, from that beautiful blue thing, way off, far, far above. There must be another country up there with some mighty power controlling sun, wind, lightning, cold and all. Why is it that lightnings do not always and regularly show their terrible flashes? Why is it that lightning strikes man sometimes and kills him, or kills his children or his cattle? Why is lightning inimical to man? Why does it burn huts? Why do fearful winds and rain-storms destroy property? It must have

some reason, and whoever be the master of these terrible forces, must know whom and when to hurt. That powerful master must know that the man whom the lightning struck was a cruel man, a bad man, because the lightning did not strike any one else.

Nor did one savage alone speculate thus, but whole families, tribes together, sitting and lying around on the soft grass on the river bank, when her majesty, the queen of heavens was outshining her starry maids of honor. Nature's grandeur, the magic power it casts upon human imagination, undoubtedly must have constituted the topics of conversation a thousand times among our naked, savage forefathers. All agreed, for none knew better, that there *must* be such a "supernatural power" that controls these wonderful manifestations of greatness and majestic beauty in nature.

Even in our own days, when we know better, or, at least, we ought to know better, Christians and their preachers and ministers will seek and positively announce the "finger of God" whenever a "wicked" man is struck by lightning or some other calamity, or unknown disease befalls one. Nay, they pray for rain, ring the bells against thunder-storms, and make the sign of the cross at each sharp flash of lightning. Floods, earthquakes, great conflagrations, plagues of every kind even to-day are attributed to supernatural powers, and clergymen do not blush in this age of common-sense to propose prayer and fasting as remedies against natural calamities.

Truly, "*Timor primos deos creavit*," — fear created the first gods,—as the ancient thinkers well remarked. Men feared for their lives, for their property; and, as their rude force was of no account against almighty nature, they took to supplication, beseeching "powers that be" to have mercy upon their wretchedness, and for which mercy they were ready in return to give and sacrifice the dearest things they possessed: their cattle, their land-products and even their own children. Thus human sacrifice was called into existence, to avert evils, to obtain favor from an imaginary, unseen and unreal "supreme being."

Experience taught men to seek refuge against wind, frost and rain; to build their huts upon trestles, to float upon water by means of non-sinking substances; to traverse ravines and rivers by bridges. Experience taught men to exclude cold and let in light by glass windows; to build fire and let out smoke by chimneys. Experience taught men to use fibres of plants to cover their bodies, besides skins of animals. Experience taught men to fry animal flesh, to boil plants, use salt, cultivate plants, fruit, grain for themselves and their herds. Experience taught men that stone was harder than wood, and that the latter will yield to the strokes inflicted upon it by the former; thus wood was shaped at man's will and skill. Later experience taught men that metals were still harder than stone, and that metals, iron in particular, became soft in fire and

much harder by sudden cooling, and that even the hardest stone would yield to iron and steel. Suffering from cold taught men to search for wood, turf, and roots and with stiff fingers, shivering limbs, they dug into the ground, till they discovered a black stone. Perhaps they built their fire-places with such black stone, until they found out that it took fire and gave out a more penetrating and more intense heat than wood; they called it *coal*. One discovery followed another, century followed century; experience was handed down from father to son, so was traditional explanation of natural phenomena. The former systematized became knowledge, the latter also systematized grew up into religion. Antagonism between knowledge and belief is absolutely natural. Every step experience made forward displaced belief. Thus, for example, experience taught men that many fruits and plants are poisonous, and they probably did not dare touch any fruit until they saw that their cattle could eat it without harm. Now, when man first tasted an orange, or a grape or berry, he doubtless said to himself: "I thought it was poisonous!" Experience thus dispelled one belief after another. A child believes *everything*, because it has *no experience of anything*. From the first moment of its consciousness, a child does nothing else but rid itself of "I thought," "I believed." A boy, introduced into chemistry, physics, or any positive science, will perpetually repeat "I thought it was so and so, etc."

Man found out early enough that "I thought," "I believed," could not possibly govern the world. By "I thought," "I believed," no justice, no right, no safety, no peace could subsist. Imagine banking business, military affairs, state government, criminal suits, etc., carried on by "I thought," "I believed"! Just think of the consequences!

You have read the history of the battle of Waterloo? That battle sealed the fate of Napoleon, of France, and of the nations of Europe. Help for Napoleon was near at hand; a large force of heavy cavalry was in full speed toward the battle-field to crush down the enemy, but brave Napoleon and his great general "thought" and "believed" that the field was clear; none "thought," none "believed" that there was a wide and deep *trench* running across the path of the infuriated cyclone-like French cavalry. Had they not "believed," had they "known" the fact, that army would not have been destroyed by that trench, and the fate of Europe were differently decided.

Is it sufficient in a criminal court to "believe" or "think" that a person is a murderer?

Will a bank be satisfied with your "belief" that you had a deposit there, when you drew up your check to be cashed? Can you even be excused if you fire your rifle at a dark, moving object in the forest, and shoot your companion instead of a game animal, that you "thought" or "believed" him to be the game?

No, it is not "belief" man is after, it is positive knowledge of facts, where there can be no doubt or

controversy. Why are there no Catholic, Episcopal, Presbyterian, Baptist or Methodist arithmetics? Yet nobody claims that arithmetics, geometry, algebra, logarithms are "revealed word of God," and yet no one dares deny that $2+2$ makes 4. Why do not Catholics, Protestants, Jews or Mohammedans controvert that two and two are six or five? Because a child will refute them; because a child can prove the matter by fact; because solid facts satisfy reason, while the best belief will not satisfy reason, will always leave some room for doubt. Wherever therefore human skill and experience is able to follow up belief and establish positive facts, belief must skip and climb higher, beyond the grasp of reason. This is why belief keeps up trading and dealing in stuff beyond the grave, after human life, or thousands of years back, where it finds safe shelter in the darkness. The dogma has been chased out from all phases of human life, so that it has no foothold anywhere to-day. Science followed it up in the womb of the earth, smashing its hell and devils; rose after it to the sky, caught up the weapon of the "supreme being," guided it down to the earth, disarmed heaven, founded insurance companies to repair the damages, proving that lightning rods beat prayers. Science ascended and penetrated the depth of the universe, brought near into sight fabulous distances, of which belief itself never dreamt, shattered heavens, the abode of the "saved souls" and found no thrones, no angels, no seraphims, no great

"lamps," no gimlet holes through which the glory of God shone from the seventh heaven.

Science followed belief to the "pillars" of the earth, and found none; followed it to find the garden of Eden, and found none; followed it to the "end" of the earth, and found none; went around the earth, found it round, found the "antipodes" that belief denied, and found more of the earth than belief and "revelation" knew of. Science did not find the big mountains behind which the sun was stationed during night, nor the unfinished part of the heavens, that God left for the Jewish rabbis to complete and finish. Science did not find the giants, nor leviathan, although it circumnavigated the globe a thousand times. Science mounted the Ararat, but found no remnants of the ark; but it found higher mountains than Ararat. Science mounted Horeb and Olympus, but no gods were found residing there.

Science opened and dissected the human body, found more particles than 613 as Jews believe, but found no soul anywhere. Science found out that diseases have natural causes and natural remedies which are more healing than prayer.

In a word, science displaced belief and chased it out from all corners of the world, so much so, that it can find absolutely no place within the visible world, and so it is stealing around dark corners like a spook, dreading the light of reason. It sits on the ruins of dead cities, in the realm of fading oblivion, dying-out memories, and thence it scares and tries to

frighten people into paying for masses, missions and pew-rent.

From all this it will be clear that education is the most deadly poison against belief. Where there is a right sort of education belief must dwindle down and die out. Belief is like a luxuriant growth of weed, thistle, bramble and brush, before the axe and plough of reason arrive. Set them into operation and the field rejoices. Where formerly ignoble weed and bramble paraded, a safe and ready shelter for snakes and rats, now you plant potatoes and cabbage, sow wheat and rye, set out a vineyard and orchard; you build a cottage, surround it with a beauteous lawn, add a charming flower garden, a shed for bee-hives, outbuildings, and the place overwhelms you with blessings of health, of pleasure, of income, of happiness.

The same is true of education.

Education is the cultivation of natural faculties.

A child is given me for education. A child is like a tender twig planted in the soil of life, that just begins budding ready to send forth its first leaflets. When moisture and sunshine abounds, its growth and budding are enhanced to exuberance. The gardener or tutor must be ever ready with the pruning knife, for the new limbs are spurious in most cases; they are "I thought" and "I believed," *i. e.* false ideas, outside impressions caused by appearances, not by things real. These must be trimmed judiciously, and none but genuine ones must be left. The child

will hear from ignorant people, in the yard, in the street that God gives the rain ; God gives sunshine ; God gives health, and all the rest. Surely, the child knows nothing of God, no more than its papa or the preacher. How can an honest man satisfy himself with an affirmative answer to the child's naïve inquiry ? An honest father or tutor will take the inquisitive child to the nearest tree or plant, will let the child pluck a leaf or a blade of grass, and explain how it gets moisture from the soil. Subsequently he explains to the child the circulation of water from seas and rivers up to the clouds, the cause of the winds, and how rains are formed and fall down upon the earth. I am sure that the child feels more delighted and infinitely more satisfied than by the stupid answer of ascribing it to God. Do not threaten your child with God, hell and devil, things about which you know nothing, for you discredit yourself before your own offspring, you lose your authority, it will not believe you when you mean what you say. You hesitate to tell the servant in the child's presence, much less to the child, that you are not at home, when it knows that you are at home. You do not threaten your child with cutting or burning out its tongue, hands ; splitting its head and the like, for it knows well that you will not be the master of your word ; such folly will only damage your own credit, and it only encourages the child.

How many centuries must have elapsed since men first began to count their fingers and toes ? For

it is certain that our decimal and centenary system owes its origin to counting the fingers and toes.

Doubtless it cost thousands of years before the human family advanced far enough to systematize numbers, establish the laws of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division, or the elements of arithmetic; and other thousands of years till geometry, algebra and other high mathematical calculations enabled man to build a New York-Brooklyn bridge.

Our nomadic ancestors spent part of their lives in nightly vigils taking care of their flocks and herds. They could not help noticing that some nights were pitch dark even without clouds, others lighted by the silvery shining of the moon or half moon, a reversed half moon, etc., and that these changes were regular year after year, that is, one phase followed the other incessantly. What else was it for them than a very punctual calendar? The sun manifested no such easily noticeable changes, except not rising on precisely the same point, and that the weather was warm when the days were long, and when shorter the weather grew colder. No doubt but these early men counted the phases of the moon. "My son was born as many (full) moons ago as all my fingers;" *i. e.* 10 moons (months) ago. A month is a year of the moon. The very word year means moon, for year is the German *yahr* (yar), which is a Hebrew word originally *yarsahh*, meaning the moon. People,

then, could talk and say, "my father was 969 years old;" this means, "my father was 80 years and 9 months old." If a certain fabulous man is said to have entered an ark when 600 years old, his age was precisely 50 years.

The beginning of all other sciences were analogous. They began low at some very simple observation of the works of nature, and through the course of many centuries, thousands of years, items were added to items, systems grew up, studied by thinking people who communicated orally before books were written, their knowledge to those who had none. Later on wealthy parents sent first their grown sons to get instructed, later their smaller boys, and lastly even children took a share in a degree of instruction.

Had education and instruction been left alone to continue to develop under the greatest men the world ever produced, had it been able to grow freely, benefited by the great discoveries the Greek scholars and masters enriched experience with; the human race were 1500 years ahead. But Christianity burst in with its ignorance and contemptible fanaticism, covered the world with complete darkness for 1500 years, so that not one school, not one philosopher, not one pedagogue, not a spark of light remained; all was buried as if an ocean had made an inroad upon a fertile continent sweeping, washing, drowning and crushing every spark of life throughout the land, leaving nothing behind but death, desolation, mud and swamp.

Great libraries were burnt and destroyed ; philosophers, among them Hypathia the only great female philosopher, murdered ; priestly murderers excited and instigated riots, led mobs against schools and scholars. Invaluable rolls of manuscript were cast into the fire, science, scientific apparatuses not less than works of art were wantonly destroyed. Only such works of antiquity were spared as could escape the rage of the Christians. True, some classical works were left, not for the love of erudition in these savage bigots, but because they could not destroy all vestige of Greek and Latin literature. The great school of Alexandria was converted into a ridiculous junk-shop of theology, a hitherto unknown stuff, impudently called "science." Many of these "theologians" came from obscure provinces where not a single science was ever known ; where never existed a school of any kind ; where not one industry was ever heard of save usury ; where not a blacksmith's shop, not a ship on the sea, no learning, no philosophers, no pedagogues, no political state, in one word, not one speck of human intelligence ever was born, cultivated or even known !

Now these people came to supersede the learned Greeks and Romans ; these people came to take education and instruction, school and science into their hands ! These people came to appreciate progress, culture, refinement and classicism ! Yet these very people dishonestly claim and, unblushingly assert that they "saved" the classics, they created civilization !

It took *more than a thousand years*, remember, more than a thousand years, before these maniacs began to appreciate *Aristotle*! Then, they were chewing on his works, ruminating on them for fully 500 years, after the Arabs have saved those works for them! Even to this very moment that heathen Aristotle is their A and Z, their all and all. Yes, Aristotle *the heathen*, who lived more than three hundred years before Rabbi Yeshúa was born, is still the greatest *Christian* philosopher.

We must not forget that not one single branch of learning was either brought in with Christianity or invented by it. Nay, Christians opposed, persecuted learning as they oppose and persecute it to this day. Whatever learning and erudition we possess now, the persecuted scholars had to acquire stealthily, many of them having been put to death, others imprisoned as sorcerers. It is only during the last three hundred years, that is, since the time of Reformation, that man began to recuperate, and recover what Christianity so barbarously destroyed and prevented. All that we have to-day is the work of only three hundred years. Where could we be, now, had Christian barbarism not interfered with our free development!

Since the time of Reformation heathen arithmetic, heathen geometry, astronomy, physics, logic, metaphysics, Mohammedan figures, Mohammedan algebra, Mohammedan chemistry, infidel discoveries, infidel experiments and infidel research have gradually

brought back nations to the interrupted system of schools, philosophers and instructors, and to-day all nations have their schools, although Christian ignorance still persistently interferes with them. Protestant Christianity is as much an enemy of scientific progress and education as the Catholic is, only less refined, more rude and equally intolerant. Those three hundred years above referred to under Protestant sway, doubtless, aided mankind in its struggle for mental freedom, for Protestantism itself was but a movement for freedom, but, after it consolidated in some shape, it grew as hostile to intellectual freedom as the old Church, and the world found itself in shackles once more. Clouds gathered again, darkness and tyranny cast their gloom once more; but intellectual aspirations, enthusiasm for mental freedom were too deep-rooted to be manacled much longer, and France actually broke forth with a terrific crash, shattering property and thrones, and upon the ruins of feudalism, upon the corpses of the oppressors, clergy and nobility, the Goddess of Reason was actually crowned and enthroned. Thomas Paine wrote his book under the influence of this great victory of Reason, and called his work the "Age of Reason." In America the flags of revolution were hoisted, and Reason reported another great victory in establishing a free republic with theist statesmen and generals, waving in their hands a manly, free frame of Constitution, the first of its kind, in which not a syllable of allusion was made to any

religious mania, thus securing mental freedom for all eternity.

Let no generation of slaves and bigots ever dare touch that sacred document with their religion-shackled hands. Those three hundred years were certainly not one half as fruitful in practical learning and instruction as fifty years of this century, that is, since agnosticism "acquired" some rights for open existence.

Theology and religionism are dwindling away just as fast as education is spreading. The day is near when all men will attain a certain standard of education when religions will fade away by spontaneous abandonment, and man becoming free, will need no hell, no preacher; *duty* will take the place of religion, and national holidays supersede worship.

Under these influences a new era of school system sprang up with a strong determination to eliminate religion from the sacred temple of science, as a natural drawback and a demon of discord and disturbance. The "teacher" system, in which one man gave instruction in all branches of knowledge, was buried and the branch-system introduced, where each science was represented by a specialist. A Latinist taught but Latin, a Greek scholar taught but Greek, the natural historian taught natural history, the historian taught history, arithmetician, arithmetic; physicists taught physics, chemists taught chemistry, etc.

This system of schools grew slowly during the last

fifty years. It developed a new generation in Europe and created a new class of scholars hitherto unknown. Schoolmen, however, discovered that instruction became rather one-sided, stuffing the youth with too much science to the detriment of other equally important things. They made the discovery that true *education* was neglected. Whereupon, experienced professors by diligent and scrupulous inquiry into their own experience, discovered and laid down the principles of education and instruction, and a new science was created under the name of "pedagogy." From that date no teacher could obtain a diploma for public function unless he had a thorough course in this new science for which new chairs were attached to the universities. Teachers' seminaries were erected, to educate competent teachers, and those already employed, were compelled to take a course in pedagogy. That the new system is creating a new world in scholarship, learning, training, discipline, scientific investigation, politics and in all social relations, is certain. Italy, the foremost Catholic country, was the first to receive a great blow from the schoolmasters of Germany, the papal chair was shaken, Austria, another Catholic pillar, humiliated, the German nations united in an empire and took the lead in military, political, literary and scientific matters with such an authority that no one dared question or contest.

Nothing can and nothing does damage the reputation of our schools, and nothing is more derogatory

to our national dignity, nor does anything reflect more discreditably upon the rank and level of our educational institutions than the dismal sight of "Reverends," figuring in a great number of so-called "non-sectarian" institutions. This comical fact reminds one forcibly of Bulgaria and East Rumelia, where the legislature is composed to a great extent of priests and monks, as the bearers of "intelligence," for they are almost the only classes who can read and write. I am sure, America is not so poor in intelligence, nor so destitute of competent scholars as to justify such an abnormal condition of affairs.

America has practical scientists for almost every branch of learning, and ample means to secure the services of the greatest scholars and thinkers of the century of any nationality upon the globe. Prominent foreign scholars were and are invited to several of our best institutions, for science has no country, no nationality; those who appreciate science and scientific men, honor themselves, and render service to humanity. Are preachers Latinists, philosophers, geologists, engineers, astronomers, physicists, chemists or any sort of scientists?

What do preachers know? All whom I met, or whose works I read are a hundred years behind the age, in part totally ignorant, save a superficial newspaper and encyclopædical learning, picked up unsystematically on the highways of public, daily life.

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The truth however is, that the process of decom-

position and dissolution of all religions in civilized America will not only continue but increase in the same ratio as education is spreading, and according to the intensity of the strength of the decomposing forces. The chief source of increase for religionism is immigration, bringing in Irish, Italian and German Catholics, English, German, Swede and Danish Protestants; while the treasury of Agnosticism is America. The nation is agnostic at heart, hence free investigation, rapidly growing industry, inventions, development of large cities, spreading of knowledge in spite of the "Reverend" preachers sitting in college presidencies.

CHAPTER VI.

"Of all virtues, justice is the best ;
Valor without it is a common pest."

JUST think of our public schools at the end of the present enlightened century, when science is not only gaining ground, but rapidly dislodges Christianity and all other beliefs; when positive facts of experience are the only things accepted as proper subjects for preaching; when even a child laughs at the silly "sun and moon stopping" stories; the preacher is still permitted to molest and disturb youth with his Bible in our public schools!

Bible in state and municipal schools in an enlightened republic in this age!

What does prayer and Bible mean in the sanctuary of science?

Does Bible help arithmetic, spelling or geography? Does it help physics, algebra, geometry, chemistry?

If ignorance were materialized and it became as hard as marble the white race could smelt it much easier than to squeeze out one drop of science from the Bible; and to turn that marblized ignorance into wisdom and high science is a much easier task than to either instruct or educate an honest, decent, dutiful generation of citizens.

Who does the Bible talk about? Does it give us

statistics or proceedings of the Greek or Roman Senate? Does it teach us state and scientific life in Egypt, which might well interest our modern society? Does it disclose the achievements of scientific labor of the Egyptians, Chaldeans, Persians, Assyrians, or other worthy nations? No; it talks about an obscure little gang of usurers, miracle-jugglers, who never coalesced into an organized state; who never played any rôle in the world's history; who never contributed a particle of any imaginable matter to the progress of the nations of earth. It speaks of cruel people despising lepers, vermin and theft; of the deserts of Arabia; of the rocks, mountains, these dry creeks and rivers of a forlorn county of Syria. It talks of Jericho, of Jerusalem and of Bethlehem, places not worth Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Chicago or Washington. It talks of Eliyohu, Yehoyohu, Yeshúa, Shim'on, of men who, certainly are worth a Napoleon, a Kant, a Copernicus, a Columbus, a Humboldt, a Darwin, a Spencer, a Washington. It talks of miracles, like man-hu (manna), of crossing the Red Sea, stopping the sun and moon, of the power of driving out the devils; yet they did not discover America, they did not build the "City of Paris" and a Union Pacific to cross the Red Sea and the desert; nor did they light Jerusalem with electricity, nor did they write, print or read anything like our dailies, no matter how much revelation they may have received from "heaven," no matter how many miracles they

have wrought. Columbus was well worth a couple of Moseses and Joshuas; a Fulton was well worth a "prophet;" Krupp and Lieutenant Zalinsky's method is certainly as effective to besiege a fort as that of Joshua around Jericho.

What can the Jews teach us, the Jews who are not only inferior to us in learning, civilization and skill, but who never possessed even the germs of either civilization or morality?

Is it compatible with reason, is it consistent with common sense to witness the anomaly of a professor explaining to his class the planetary system, the revolving of the earth around the sun; while the preacher steps in and reads: "Then spake Joshua to the Lord in the day when the Lord delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon. And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. So the sun stood still . . . about a whole day"!

Is not the above written in the book of Jasher?

Now, why should we throw doubt into the mind of our children for the sake of the preacher, and controvert truth for the sake of absolute ignorance? Do not our legislators and trustees comprehend that science does not and should not appeal to credulity?

Those who are not yet grown out of religious

knee-breeches are welcome to preacher, and Bible, and prayer-meetings; but let them not coerce other people, and schools least of all, into the straight-jacket of preacher-rule.

These people mean well. What they mean is, that our youth should not be merely filled with deep science, but ought to imbibe *morality*; they ought to become *morally good* citizens. And since they are not aware of anything whereby morality could be instilled into juvenile hearts; and whereas preachers cry at every corner selling their article as the best moral remedy: our citizens accept as granted that preacher and Bible are the infallible agents of morality.

Before going any further, let me tell these well meaning fellow-citizens, that philosophers or educated men rarely stand before a court or tribunal charged with crime. The highest morality is a perfect harmony of the citizens of a State, where no courts, no jails, no judges, no police are required. A State, in which every individual man respects the rights of others, does not trespass upon the boundary lines of the "mine and thine," where reason and justice are the judges; where "to give everybody his due" is respected as taught by Kon-fu-tseh in China 500 years before Rabbi Yeshúa was born. If we say of a man that he is "wise" it means infinitely more than to say that he is a *saint*. A wise man, a philosopher knows no selfishness, avarice, no grabbing, no oppression, no advantage-taking. If a

State could be imagined as composed of wise men, there could be no misery, no vice, no crime, but perfect peace and happiness. Knowledge and education are the remedies. When all men covet money and realities, pleasures, and what people consider, things good, only moderately, as far as they are natural necessities and no more, then, nobody will be poor, nor anybody rich. Morality then, is nothing more than *wisdom*.

The Bible and the preacher do not teach wisdom. The Bible is but a vain talk of what and how an ancient people acted. The writers of the Bible were not learned men and most of them not moral; many of them would be put to prison to-day for their deeds, others would be sent to an insane asylum.

Are these men apt and desirable models to be set up for our youth to imitate and copy?

Ought we to try to moralize people by Bible? Does Protestantism not owe its torn and dilacerated condition to the Bible? Does any man of reason pretend that division is better than harmony? Does any man of reason claim that it is a wise principle to tell an unripe youth, a child, or even an individual, that you are an Anglican, you are Presbyterian, you are Baptist, you are Methodist; you are right, all others are wrong. Is it sensible, is it honest to plant strife, contention, disharmony? Is it right to obtrude the Bible, the source of quarrels and disturbance? Besides, who of you does understand the Bible? With what right do you insist that it teaches this and

that? You don't understand it, nor does your preacher, nor his bishop, nor even one in the whole congregation. As a matter of fact, your preacher is often ignorant of any other language than the English. He cannot compare the English Bible with Latin or Greek, much less with Arabic, Syriac, Coptic, Armenian; nor can he resort to the original Hebrew in which the Bible was written. Not one among a thousand preachers has the faintest idea of talmudic literature, knows nothing of rabbinical writings, has no dream of Jewish traditions, manners and rites, ceremonies and usages of the synagogue ancient and modern, how then could he understand the Bible?

Suppose now, some of us wrote a history of America, in which it is said that Columbus met God in the mountains of Genoa, bade him to go to Spain, obtain means, and being inspired by God's special revelation set out on his journey and discovered America. His journey was accomplished in a miraculous way; a swarm of angels took him upon their shoulders and carried him to a distant island, where he found a golden vessel with twelve great sea monsters attached to her, one angel sat on each whale, the rest entered the vessel with Columbus and thus they entered the harbor of Boston, which the angels called Plymouth Rock, in remembrance of the rocks of Genoa. Thence he went to England and France, preached penance and the elect saints accompanied him to the shores. There he stretched out his arms, prayed to God to protect his saints, and lo, the

Atlantic ocean opened up, the waters receded and stood solid on both sides, and the Pilgrim Fathers walked across the ocean with dry feet. God gave Columbus and God's elected people, the "Pilgrim Fathers" a law, written by his own fingers, called the "Declaration of Independence," to be kept sacred forever. The elders of the people under Columbus then convened in the city they built near Plymouth Rock, called Washington, divided the promised land into 38 States, that being the number of the families of the chosen people, enacted laws, built an altar and memorial chapel called "Capitol," whereupon God hath called his faithful servant Columbus. Approaching to death, Columbus summoned the elders and scribes of the sons of God, selected one from among them to succeed him in the sacred ministry. His choice fell upon Georgius, surnamed Washington after his birth-place. Columbus then blessed his sobbing people, changed himself into a pigeon (Columba in Latin means a pigeon) and disappeared. The faithful people lamented their great prophet. The new prophet Georgius, commonly called Washington, one day was walking in his garden, when God appeared to him and revealed to him the great secret of the whereabouts of Columbus' remains. He rode there with the chief priest and the deacons, and upon reaching the spot, the delegates of God found a dead pigeon. They offered sacrifice to the Lord, erected stones for a memorial, and there they buried the sacred ashes of Columbus.

Many miracles proved the identity of his remains, and the grateful nation built a city on the place called after the great prophet *Columbus*, in the land of the Ohio family. And so forth.

The Bible is precisely like this impromptu narration. The "law" is the constitution of the Jews; the history is the history of the Jews; all put together is "revealed" exactly like our "Declaration of Independence," to be kept forever.

Preachers are no scientists, preachers are no pedagogues or educators; the Bible is not the only source for morality; preachers are not superior in morality to any particular profession, therefore they can have no just claims for preferment to anybody, and as far as schools are concerned, they are a nuisance.

Modesty is as unknown to a preacher as philosophy and natural science. Shallow magazine compilers give the preacher a fee and he then dashes forward and asks and answers the silly question "Why am I an Episcopalian?" "Why am I a Methodist?" "Why am I a Presbyterian?" Why, you simpleton of a preacher, it is easily answered by anybody! You are an Episcopalian, a Methodist, or a Presbyterian for the simple reason that you were *born* in it; were you born a Jew or a Moslem, why, you were a Jew or a Moslem.

Other preachers are more pretentious and audacious than to crack nuts like the above; they attack the very summit of Agnosticism and "refute" Ingersoll. One sentence of Col. Ingersoll is incomparably

more worth than a whole religious or theological encyclopædia; for, that one sentence is the dictate of common sense, while theology is a tissue of follies.

Preachers exert a most undesirable influence upon the English language and literature. The language of the English nations, and let us freely state, their taste, is so deeply perverted by preacher-spirit, that they will soon witness a time when no medical book can be written in that language. Anybody can gossip about "priest-ridden Italy," "Inquisition," "priest-craft," but let any fair-minded English person show me if the language of Italy, France, or even Spain is so miserably run down as the English is to-day! You cannot name your body, your limbs, your clothes, your natural actions and necessities. Things of the very greatest importance for the welfare of the masses cannot be explained either in books, magazines and periodicals, or in public lectures.

There is a systematic persecution of scientific literature, especially of medical publications. How can this shameless hypocrisy find votaries in a well-bred society, must be a puzzle for any civilized man, especially a European.

Reaction is a natural consequence of such a state of affairs; either death or reconvallescence; for the diseased condition must lead to some outcome. Christianity is bound to succumb on all sides, and to be overthrown.

The editor of a paper sent out inquiries to

the most prominent Agnostics of our country, and among other questions there was one concerning the most favorable soil for free thought in this country. Men of experience were fairly unanimous in asserting it was the *West* and *North-west* which is bound to lead in free thought and liberal development. So it is. The sea-coast States lose their importance and hegemony as soon as the nation ceases to import and a powerful immigration will cover up the immense space between the Sierras and the Great Lakes. The Dakotas, Wisconsin, Minnesota, perhaps Montana, and Utah are peopled, dotted with prosperous cities, wealthy rural districts, charming gardens, the homes of liberals, free thinkers of every shape and form; while the lean preacher-states of Massachusetts, Maine, Vermont will sink into desertion and oblivion, unless they lead a new reform.

Science, and her divine sister, Art, ever since mankind is conscious of reason and refined taste, were ever the objects of admiration, sympathy and love. Hold out Appelles, Zeuxis, Michel Angelo, Murillo, Meissonnier, Van Dyke, or any other acknowledged great master's painted or sculptured creation to the ignorant preacher, you have done just as much as if you had exhibited them on the Bowery, or in a stable. There are sacrilegious bigots, who like frenzied bulls with their horns dash against master works of art, painting, etching, engraving, steel cuts, statuary and sculpture, theatre, music, as if possessed by the demon of destruction. Uncultivated in mind, delud-

ed in imagination, rude and brutish in taste, as soon as they behold the immaculate breast of a bathing nymph, these at once denounce the work of art.

Yet how many will take the "revealed word of God" and read: "I have put off my coat; how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet; how shall I defile them? My bowels were moved for him. . . . And I said unto her, Thou shalt abide for me many days; and thou shalt not be for another man. . . ."

CHAPTER VII.

WE have arrived to a point finally, where we must put the question: Has Protestant Christianity produced or created improvement in the *moral status* of the Christian nations over and above what the old orthodox church lays claim to? If it has not, it loses the right to exist; if it has, it is our duty to disclose it.

By *moral status* we mean the average goodness of all men and the practical consolidation of moral axioms, upon which society at large builds up social and physical betterment of all classes. To illustrate the real meaning and bearing of the question, we call to the reader's mind the parable of the Samaritan, that inspired society and individuals with mercy, and numerous hospitals, religious orders, alms-houses and other benevolent institutions, all of which sprang up from the thus popularized idea of mercy.

Protestant society to-day is wealthy, gay and, perhaps happy; Catholic society, comparatively speaking, is poor and melancholical. Once it was powerful, rich and haughty, for it had privileges, it was distinguished by rank, while those beneath, were abjectly poor, forsaken and taken advantage of. The old Church extolled, flattered the rich, consoled and comforted the poor, and by cunning contrivances

the number of this latter class, systematically was drained and reduced. Poverty is like hunger, a lack of food; poverty is like darkness, a lack of light; like cold, the lack of heat. Wherever there is happiness, there will be misery; wherever there is wealth, there is poverty, like darkness, or shadow, where there is light. The old Church forced spiritual solace upon the poor, who were kept down in ignorance so as to meekly bear their fate. The poor flocked to monasteries and convents founded by bishops and wealthy magnates ostensibly—and in most cases sincerely—for the “glory of God” and the “salvation of the soul.” Many of these monasteries were richly endowed by sinners of high rank, a duty imposed upon them by the Church, as a penance and an atonement for their sins. Very few poor boys had a chance in those days to emerge from obscurity and mount to a higher rank than that of their humble parents. The only open gate for prominence in time of peace, was, monastic learning. Children of the poor therefore entered monasteries “to do penance for their sins,” and by this act, while on one hand they found means of sustenance, and relieved their parents of a great deal of care; on the other hand, these same boys and girls lived in fact on, and consumed their own capital; for they were cut off from the world; they did not multiply and augment the number of the poor. It was a pious, but none the less a devilish guilotine for the poor. Millions of boys and girls were and are to-day disposed of in this manner by the Catho-

lic church; and if we had an exact statistical table of all priests, monks, hermits and nuns thus robbed of posterity, we should not hesitate to say, that if they all had lived a natural life and had left children, their number would equal at least the half of the present number of the inhabitants of the earth!

This merciless and truly diabolical drain on the poor almost stripped Europe of the *laboring classes*. Agriculture and industry were maimed. No competition in production, no increase in the number of producers and consumers, a sure stagnation and deterioration was foreboded by that impious and reckless economy in human blood, and the final result could have been anticipated by a philosopher. Decay, stagnation, downfall were the punishment nature kept in store for Papacy for these unnatural crimes. Revolutions broke out, Reformation was born, emancipation of the poor and germination of a new class, the "laboring class," were the issue, which all are, *by their nature* deadly enemies to Papacy.

Monasticism being abolished, the classes, which under Roman policy would have filled the nests of sin, grew up free, thrown upon their own resources, thus thickening population and rendering the struggle for existence so much more sharp and resolute. This brought about competition in labor, in quality of production and enhancing values, wealth began to accumulate more generally and shift toward those who had a stronger grasp and more means to acquire it. But as the masses of consumers increased in number

and the system of distribution had to keep pace, industry was made lively, commerce had to meet the demand, creating a lively trade, travel, navigation, enterprise and general moneymaking. No land remained wasted, no hands idle. The soil of the north underwent a thorough cultivation, leading people to experimenting, to improvements in tools, implements and methods. One discovery followed another, new ways and means were found to produce and acquire wealth; new fields, new industries, new facilities were added to the existing ones.

The south remained unchanged. Monastic wasting of human blood and energies continued unchecked, sinking lower and lower in number of population, in intelligence, in agriculture and prosperity.

The discovery of the new continent added an inexhaustible source of wealth to the existing field of agriculture and industry. Southerners discovered it, southerners invaded it first, and took possession of the greater part; but it did not do them any good. For, these people were taught poverty, obedience and chastity, but no work and enterprise. They came in to rob, murder, conquer for their kings and pope, get rich at once on treasures, accumulated by others, and not to *produce* riches by industry and honest labor. Northern invasion took to the north as did southern to the south; and the southerners, or Latin elements were dislodged and absorbed. The north came to stay, to *produce* wealth and not to hunt it. Success accompanied honest labor, and the north

grew rich, while the southerner again became poor and remained ignorant, but—Catholic.

As we premised, the poor are natural allies of the old orthodox Church everywhere on the globe. The reason is that the poor are timid, and being much worried for their existence, are afraid to lose a powerful patron like the Church.

The poorman is ignorant, for, lack of means prevents him from getting educated; and in his ignorance he acquiesces good-naturedly to the suggestions and teachings of his Church. Not so the wealthy. He can provide for education; he has things solid and positive, which he will not surrender to a begging church. He runs risks, that render him cautious. He knows the value of money, because he earned it by hard labor. He has experience in commerce, in business, where cheat and fraud are not at all unusual; Church demands he considers in a business way, his suspicions are ever awake, and will trust the Church no more than any other person or institution. He has the courage to face the Church, for, he is the owner of his wealth, he must have the right to contest and defend it against anybody, be it the Pope himself. He has the means to buy books, has the leisure to read books, he is ever ready to patronize literature, support periodicals, papers and all literary enterprises. He knows that not all is true that people say or write, even if it be the prophets.

Poor people are more brotherly, more humane, hospitable, compassionate, more ready to help, assist,

feed, clothe, shelter, protect a fellow human being, than are the wealthy. A rich man very often is selfish, avaricious, heartless, feelingless, incompassionate, pitiless ; he will not readily listen to a less fortunate fellow human being. Why ? He was successful in racing after wealth, which he perhaps made by a relentless perserverance, good luck, sometimes without scruple, but always regardless of other interests.

Poverty and wealth mould character, create men, shape society as much as climate.

Northern changes in religion evolved a new, northern Protestant character.

Earth began to be considered a reality "real estate"—the "kingdom of heaven" a non-reality, an illusion.

The concrete became the ideal, while the abstract, the spiritual became a dead allegory, a symbol.

Once Orthodox Christians cast away their wealth, their castles, titles, treasures ; became poor to imitate their ideal Jesus. Abnegation, penance, alms, self-sacrifice were earnest realities, for which kings and princes laid down their crowns ; priests and monks sacrificed their lives bringing religious consolation to those lingering in agony of death in plague stricken places. Delicate ladies took the veil to succumb to the dreadful plague while ministering help and assistance to the poor in crowded hospitals, or dingy huts.

With Reformation all this changed into non-realities. The emancipated and now wealth-acquiring poor thought that Jesus died for all, he satisfied for all sins.

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A mighty and fatal question is staring in the face the Christian world, threatening death and desolation if not speedily and radically solved ; it is the question of *pauperism*, commonly called the "labor question." Whatever be its real name, the fact is, that it is the outcome and natural result of the claim of equalization of men by Protestantism. Nothing could illustrate its true nature more forcibly than our late civil war for the emancipation of the Ethiopian race. Open the gates, let the slaves go free, render them equal to their masters ; but give them no money, no land, no home, no trade, no occupation, no tools, no resources, no education, but start them out on a race and competition with their masters ! This policy of the northern States towards the South is but a facsimile, a copy of the one followed by Protestantism in shattering the old castles of feudalism, in abolishing social barriers between ecclesiastical and lay, and between noble and plebeian. A liberalism out of the pockets of others ! The brigand-like liberalism swamped the southern States, in exactly the same manner as it has swamped Europe. The South is overrun with homeless, hungry, beggarly negroes, once a blessing for the South, now a curse ; for, the freed, but not cared for masses of negroes are driven by poverty and homelessness, political and racial hatred, destitution and despair, want and ignorance into a pool of crimes, from which they never can be redeemed. The same spectacle reveals itself in Europe wherever such a cheap liberalism has come

to the rescue, be it revolution, be it an ukase. Europe is as full of white paupers as is the South with her blacks, both eager to earn their living by fair means if possible, by foul, if otherwise. Being without means to start in life, without land, without home, nothing remains for these millions but the rotten system of barbarism to embrace, the so-called wage-system.

In ancient times the strongest and bravest was the chief, the leader. Conquest, robbery, cattle raising, fishing and some agriculture were the means to earn subsistence. The brutal, the cruel, bold robbers and murderers received the heaviest share of spoils, were the friends and comrades of the chief, and were his advisers, his court and companions. The less blood-thirsty, the less adventurous sought more humane occupations, such as agriculture, handicraft, trading and cattle-raising, and had no share in spoils and robbery. The former class were "nobles," the latter "people" or "populace." Before money was invented, the products of agriculture and manufacture were interchanged: one cow, for example, for a garment; a certain amount of grain or vegetables or fruit, etc., for a house. The use of money changed all this. Products of the land as well as products of industry, labor and the person of the laborer became mere values represented by coins and at last by worthless slips of paper. By this means the exchange of products was taken out of the hands of the producers, and it became a special

trade in itself, giving birth to money exchanges, speculation in values, to banks and to fictitious prices, and values.

Servants and laborers at first were partly personal property, partly engaged for remuneration in natural products, work being acknowledged a saleable value.

Had agriculture never yielded more than to cover the indigencies of the husbandman, all human beings were compelled by nature to toil and earn their living by agriculture. But nature's superabundance of gifts made it possible for man to seek other resources and to shun the bodily exertions and hardships connected therewith. A far greater part of the human family never acquired the skill of productive labor owing to the fact that the necessities of life could be obtained by either distributing agricultural products, or turning the raw products into marketable and consumable goods. This again presupposed money and skill. The money-owners lacked skill, the skilled lacked money. Mere money without over-production is as worthless as is over-production without consumers and buyers. At the side of agriculture, mining, cattle-raising, hunting and fishing ranked as productive occupations, being, at the same time, consumers of the farmers' products, and the farmers in their turn the consumers of the miners' products. As the conversion and interchange of these various products could not be immediate but by values (money), the profit naturally remained in the

hands of those who had the "capital" to buy up the products at one price in the unmistakable hope of selling the same at an advanced price to the classes of consumers. Producers in consequence have remained poor, and will forever continue so.

A thousand fold complication arose from these relations of production, conversion and interchange as century followed century each bringing some new industry into existence. Wealth gathered and flowed in one direction, viz., toward capital. It developed four classes of people in the society, namely, the producer, the laboring consumer, the capitalist and the non-laboring consumer. All these tend to one point "to make a living," and from this point of view we can distinguish three sources of bread earning: *labor, capital and profession.*

In recent times much has been said and written about this deep reaching question, never regulated by laws, never systematized by philosophy, and which threatens society with a bloody convulsion. Some would-be political-economists oppose labor to capital or vice versa, and claim that labor, in the abstract, is capital. This supposition is incorrect and is only good to sharpen antagonism and create mischief. Let us state the question in a few words.

Living and comfortable life is the only aim of all human work, stir and enterprise. The means of comfort is the accumulation of consumable products; so as to free the mind from the worry or want. If a man were able to choose the finest site for his domi-

cile, build a mansion with his own hands from stone, brick, iron, wood all produced by himself; fill his store-room with the finest farm and garden products, his, and his family's wardrobe with the best clothes; his rooms with the finest furniture; his library with choice books and periodicals; his stables with horses and cattle; assure him forever that he never shall see want in anything; he is free to go to theatres, public and private entertainments; the services of professional men will be always on hand gratis; do you suppose that such a man would stretch out his hands after money? He would not. But, since our modern life has so many claims and indigences, yet, scarcely a glass of water can be had without returning some value for it, because all persons depend on either producing or exchanging or otherwise earning values; the struggle is carried on by all, on all sides towards obtaining the tokens of fictitious values, by which the means of sustenance can be redeemed from stores and producers. One, who possesses the most of these tokens of values can obtain comfort-bringing goods the easiest; one, who possesses the least must face want and penury. The former is rich, the latter is poor. The rich, by his capital can find new channels and resources, for all covet his money; the rich makes his living by his capital; capital therefore is one way of making a living. The poor makes his living by his bodily skill or strength, which the rich does not possess. Bodily skill and strength then is another way of

making a living. Neither is labor a capital, nor is capital a bodily skill; but both are simply means of making a living. Profession is a mental, or manual skill or learning, the utilization of which is also one way of obtaining money and thereby a livelihood.

The hardest fate is shared by the laboring consumer, *i. e.* the common laborer, who is not a producer, or if he is (~~like~~ miners are), he does not produce for himself, but for one who pays him wages. The matter were quite simple with the wage-laborer if the numbers of such were, or could be restricted. The source of the trouble is that he has no foothold; but if by some fortunate conjunction of circumstances he succeeds in taking hold of one, such a laborer, providing that he is sober, intelligent and honest, climbs up and becomes a capitalist himself. However, in the majority of cases the laborer remains poor for the lack of a start. The number of capitalists increases every year but in no proportion to the increase of the poor. Rich business men, capitalists, bankers and all people living that apparently smooth and happy life, as a matter of fact, are or become enervated, the man as much as the woman, and hardly ever can raise children. One or two generations put an end to the family, and the rich millionaire either adopts children, or, in many cases, makes virtue out of necessity, and leaves his fortune to remote relatives or bequeathes it to some "charitable" or educational institution. But few millionaires fare better no matter how good a stock they may

spring up from. Nature does not lavish all its gifts upon any one class. Fifth Avenue is a cemetery as compared with Avenues A, B, C, and the intersecting streets, teeming with swarms of unwashed and unkempt children. To one capitalist emerging from one hundred thousand producers, laborers and professionalists, one thousand children develop as laborers and competitors for wages, which number is greatly swelled by the annual emigration of poor foreign laborers. How many more are added every year to this number from among those, who may have been quite successful in life, but by accidents or other circumstances failed, and are forced to begin life again from the lowest rank in society?

Capitalists are striving for the same purpose as the laborers: To acquire what they do not possess and keep safe what they do possess. In purpose they are upon a perfectly equal footing. The possessor of means is regarded a master, a powerful man by the poor but not so by his equal. If the laborers were not any more numerous than those finding employment, they were on an equal rank with the capitalists, and the latter were not regarded with awe or fear, for they were as much depending upon the laborers as the laborers were depending on them. Whoever cannot perform a certain work himself, if that work is of a high importance to him he will kiss those hands which help him out of the difficulty; and will not only remunerate the helper but regard him a redeemer, and will strike with him a close friendship.

But, if in case of call for help a thousand hungry men rush to the spot all eager to do the "job" for any remuneration, and vie with each other for it: what then? do you expect the man not to despise your riotous throngs? Remuneration or wages then are considered a donation, extolled higher than they are worth, and labor and laborer are degraded by themselves below the level of servants or slaves to that of beggars.

Now the fact is that here are actually but two classes in society; one composed of those who own homes, the other of those who do not; that is, one of the possessors, the other of the beggars. For the laborer *is* a beggar. Look around yourself, see if you find any other beggars asking for "job," *job* meaning some means of earning money. No *job*, no bread, no home, and this is beggary. All honest men will agree with me when I say that this is no condition for a human being, that it is not a normal state for a proportion of our people far outnumbering those who own permanent homes. All honest men will grant that the abject condition of these millions is a highly dangerous sore, that will ultimately inflame society, for it is simply unendurable and not warranted by nature. A poor person has as much lawful desire for happiness as an emperor, a pontiff or a millionaire, and has just as much right to nature's gifts as any other being. Nor can laws or society deprive a man of this natural right. Privation and necessity know no laws; and it is a flagrant viola-

tion of nature's own laws to tolerate the present state of affairs, which keep the poor under the heels of the rich, and if one stretches forth his horny hands after the superabundant and stored up goods of "others," to be brandmarked as a criminal and proceeded against with fury as against a criminal. Whoever is the cause of a cause, is also the cause of what is caused, is an old axiom. No honest man will say that all poor people are criminals. Still, at least eighty per cent. of all crimes can be traced back to poverty.

Why should I endeavor to portray the intolerable state of poverty and the shocking picture of destitution in our large cities? The savages of New Guinea would blush at the sight of our *Christian* communities in their awful struggle with despair, crime, insanity and suicide. Look at the rows of brick houses called "flats" and private "residences," thousands of which yawn with the *ennui* of emptiness, while thousands of able and willing honest people tramp through the dark streets and lanes homeless for want of means to feed with money the ever greedy, hungry and insatiable "landlords." Cheap lodgings? Yes, there are cheap lodgings, at ten, fifteen or twenty-five cents a night, no matter how poor and objectionable, but they admit only "gentlemen;" where can "ladies" go? Along the streets, of course. And even those ten cents are ten cents! Where would a poor man get them if out of employment? Where will he get another ten cents or "a quarter" for his meals? There is but one alternative, *beg* or *steal*.

Wage system is a barbarism.

Divine revelation teaches us that agriculture is a punishment of God for our sins ; for, Adam, the "first man" disobeyed God, and for this crime of his was ejected from the pleasure grounds of "Eden" paradise, to cultivate the ground and become a farmer. God's *chosen people* the "Israelites" were commanded to practice *usury* while their lands were to be cultivated by *slaves*. Slavery is a divine institution, and the Ethiopian race, that is, the negroes, are declared slaves by the word of God, because they are the posterity of Ham, accursed by Noah, and their black color is the unmistakable sign and stigma of curse and malediction. Thus it is God's own sacred institution, and the northern States of the Union committed an outrageous sacrilege when in their impious boldness they dared overthrow, by the edge of the sword, by monitors and cannons, God's express institution, declaring black men free and equal with the white, and thus spurning, openly assailing and faithlessly abolishing that divine economy. Where no slaves could be had, strangers were *hired* for wages, or remuneration by natural products for the work. Hirelings were considered a little better than slaves, and the masters were not only to provide them with shelter, food, clothing and payment, but had to see to their "spiritual wants," religious duties and private morality. Owners of large estates had groups of separate houses and outbuildings where the laborers (mercenaries) lived, and do live in Europe to-day,

while others, performing domestic duties were kept within, and around the family mansion or castle. These were the "domestics" or *servants*. Artisans for many centuries back, had their trades-unions, where all who proved their skill by a *master-piece* each in his own trade belonged. These trades-unions enjoyed the privileges of nobles. They governed the market, made their own prices, protected by laws. Competition was impossible, for no master could exist unless declared such by the union. Men with money could not establish factories to be managed by experts in the trade, they themselves had to be masters, or were not allowed to enter into the business. Each master mechanic hired so many journeymen, adopted so many apprentices as the demand in his products may have required. He sold his goods in the market, he contracted for the work to be furnished, charged according to specific laws, and paid his help according to the same laws.

Papal authority being pulled down, authority at large was shattered, privileges, exemptions abolished. First ecclesiastical distinctions between priest and layman, saint and unholy, consecrated and profane were swept out of existence; then followed the noble and plebeian, afterward came in the monarchy and republic, finally the French revolution levelled the hill between man and man, and equality of men became an undisputed axiom sanctioned by law and reason alike. Since that great convulsion no privileges are acknowledged and but very few exemptions, which,

too, will cease soon, are still lingering. Anybody is welcome to establish any factory, any plant, any industry without the least idea of that trade as he runs his own risk. If his products are saleable, he will succeed ; if they are not, he fails and loses his capital. A man of means can start a watch or glass manufacturing establishment even if he never beheld a glass beyond his whiskey bottle ; all he has to do is to hire a man who "knows all about it," and these two men hire the help, acquire the raw material and within a few months a bustling, smoky and noisy settlement arises where a dismal swamp, a wild forest or dead desert met the eyes a few months ago. Skilled and unskilled "help" will crowd the place offering their services, all eager to get "work," in fact, *wages*, means to support themselves. The manager or the foreman naturally will offer the lowest wages, yet never too low for some in extreme necessity. The skilled, or expert in some particular branch will get \$25, \$30, \$40 and even more, a week, if needed ; the unskilled, or general laborer \$1.50 or \$1.25 a day. Competitors for work will underbid each other, and thus the wages are depressed by the laborers themselves, or more properly speaking, by the higher or lower degree of the misery and destitution of the competing laborers.

A laborer, skilled or unskilled, is no servant, not only for the axiom of equality, but chiefly for the thing itself. Servant, properly speaking, does not exist to-day in the civilized world.

Let us consider it for an instant. A rich man endeavors to split a block of wood. He grabs the axe, begins the work of chopping. Sweat pours down his cheeks, his palms break up in blisters, still he is bound to have the block split and chipped. Near by a sturdy and brawny poor man is standing idle. The rich man finally prefers to part with a few dimes than to suffer the pains caused by the blisters and exertion, summons the poor man who chops up the block, receives the remuneration and they part. Now, is this rich man a master? Is this poor man a servant? Certainly not.

Another. A millionaire thinks that if he built a railroad his money would return a larger percentage of income than in a bank or U. S. bonds. Good. But how to find it out? He must study up the question. He must consult other men, merchants, lawyers, engineers, who will furnish him all the information. Engineers will survey the distances, project the shortest and cheapest route, the bridges, the tunnels, filling, cutting, trestling, etc. Contractors project and specify the expenses by mile. Lumber-men specify the amount for lumber required, iron and steel manufacturers, car-companies, locomotive builders, masons, stone cutters, bridge builders, laborers, etc., all come in with their prices. No one man can do all this by himself unaided by others: are all these men the *servants* of the railroad millionaire? Is the railroad-millionaire the *master* of all these men, or is he the servant of the

merchants and travelers patronizing his road? No sane man will answer it in the affirmative.

Is then, wealth really the master? No. Wealth alone is more worthless than skill and ability. A wealthy man joins a skilled and able man to do a thing. Which of them is the master? Are they not perfectly equal? Indeed, they are as much equal as a husband and a wife. What is their relation to each other, then? None other than that of two *partners*, or confederates for the carrying out of a certain remunerative enterprise. Is it *wages* that is due to a confederate or partner; and is it the capitalist who is entitled to the bulk of the profit? No. The profit must be divided into two equal shares, one belongs to the capitalist rightfully, the other to the other partner, to be divided among all who coöperate in higher or lower degree to create the clear gain.

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Factories and large plants, in fact all, should be removed to villages, and country places for several reasons. One is the overcrowding of cities to the sanitary detriment of all. Another is the landlord leech, sucking out full three-fourths of the earnings of the poor for their dens and prisons, called "apartments" and "flats." Still another is the "car-fare" curse, which must be squeezed out of the poor laborer twice a day. Still another is the liquor pest, which stares in the face the tired laborer at every corner, a continuous temptation and allurements for the poor.

Still another, the fashion and society pest, tempting the poor to imitate the ways, manners, personal apparel and external show of the rich. In country places half of their earnings could be saved, the laborers had fewer occasions to spend, could find healthier homes, healthier children, and the families of the laborers could save much misery, they were more faithful, more virtuous; more love, more affection would dwell between husband and wife, parents and children, and fewer scandals, drunkenness, vice, murder and separation would disgrace society.

Much simpler were the question, were the numbers of the non-producing consumers not increasing alarmingly. As things are, it is a physical impossibility to find employment for all men seeking wage-work. Laborers and their leaders insist that "capital" is their enemy and they must seek strength against that enemy in labor-unions. Their idea is, that, if all laborers unite in secret organizations, they will stand like one man against another man, and then, relying upon their power and strength, they would dictate terms. Nothing can be more absurd. Suppose they could exclude all foreigners; stop emigration, compel all wage-earners to join their organizations, so that not one were outside of them: do they suppose in earnest that they could dictate terms? Never. Every man, capitalist or not, is free to withdraw his money from any enterprise, even at a great sacrifice. Any capitalist can abandon his plant or factory, no matter at what loss and retire altogether, or to

another State, or even to a foreign country. Who would suffer a comparatively heavier loss? But the laborers cannot realize their utopian hopes, nor is it desirable that they should. There are yet means and ways in this world to better the condition of the poor without resorting to threats or violence.

By far the most remarkable in all this is, that neither legislature nor society at large have even as much as attempted to find some remedy or some outcome for this most complicated and most burning question of all centuries. We cannot shut our eyes any longer, for the solution must come in some shape. If this state of things continues, or even grows worse by relentless pressure from above, like those "wheat deals" of Chicago, advancing of prices in victuals, the next generation will see that anarchy will rule supreme, law will lose its authority, for all productive and unproductive consuming classes will flow together like drops of water, and mighty social convulsions will issue to the utter detriment of the unproductive professional, mercantile and capitalistic classes. *Laborers are not represented in our legislature* to the shame of our democratic institutions. Senates, Assemblies, Congress are composed of lawyers, merchants, manufacturers, capitalists, general "business men" and sporting men; all "well off." Real, that is, actual laboring men cannot afford to "run" for any election, and the only "laboring men" who get into legislative halls, are ex-labor-

ers, who have long since forgotten the taste of the bread, made salty with the tears of destitution. This sort of "democratic" legislation is "*de me, sine me*" (about me, without me). Who could expect remedy from men not immediately interested, much less pressed, by the bitter question of shelter and bread? It is vain and unjust to repeat incessantly that the laboring classes aspire for the division of property and the wealth of the rich. Nobody holds such views, nor even a maniac. Any man of five senses, however ignorant otherwise, knows well enough that, if all the ready cash in the country, and all gold, silver, diamonds and all valuables were distributed equally among the sixty millions of inhabitants in this country, scarcely would each family get more than a hundred dollars, certainly not one thousand. And what good would that do? All were ruined and nobody were benefited. Views of this sort are not entertained by anybody; it is a fiction, and a wretched one at that.

I am sure that millions of the poor do not aspire to riches; in fact most of them were, and we can safely say, *are*, satisfied with their humble state, with their respective trades and calling; all this question involves, is a moderate increase and *steadiness* of revenues on one hand, and a cut in expenditure, as we alluded to a little above, so that a steady-working sober and honest laborer could save up some for old age, and not leave wife and children uncared for when the finger of Death closes down his eyelids.

Well, *reverende Domine* preacher, what do you think? What is your suggestion or remedy against the great evil of pauperism among our laboring people?

“Er-hm, well, I think, prohibition and er . . . the Holy Bible . . .”

I thought so! It is you, preacher, who started the avalanche by that very Holy Bible of yours, now you ought to be able to control and remedy the mighty waves that will bring evil as sure as death unless that balm is found which might heal the sore and lead the roaring waves into some safe channel. I can assure you, however, that it will not be your Holy Bible, nor the priest's holy water that is destined to solve the ulcerating labor-question. Laborers don't want you, they will not listen to your gibberish about prohibition and revelation. To mention prohibition in connection with this serious social problem is a brazen impertinence, an insult and an outrage; for it is tantamount as to say that all working people are inveterate drunkards.

Religion and preacher never solved any social or economical question, never suggested an idea for social improvement. The very fundamental principle of religion is a chimera, negation, non-entity, a dead naught. Protestantism, in this respect is even worse than Catholicism. They both are enthusiastic about the safety of the “soul” of which they know nothing, which is but a mere dream, suggested by ignorance. To think that a corporation or society of

men can exist nowadays honestly or dishonestly engaged in the business of saving a fabulous thing of which they have no information ; to sacrifice hundreds of millions worth of property ; to sacrifice happiness and the very life ; while millions of human beings hunger, freeze and suffer of want ; while millions of human beings have no shelter, no clothing and no food : I think it is a blasphemy, a crime and a sacrilege.

Laborers begin to realize keenly that they look in vain for help from the soul-saving offer ; they know full well that the soul-saver quacks and hypocrites have nothing for them but a scorn and a sneer when the only real happiness, the only real life, the bodily, the worldly one is in question ; and they turn away from chapels and preachers, from soul-affairs and religion to realities wherein to find remedy and cure for their aching sores.

Let me say a word to our honest toiling brethren.

As we have seen, the root of the evil is the *number* of wage-workers. If this continues, the whole continent of America would have to be turned into a large machine-shop and a factory in order to find employment for all. The most burning and commanding necessity is to turn away a large number of laborers toward other callings, especially the growing generation. Why not resort to agriculture ? Why not resort to gardening, silk, bee industries ? But, you will say, how can we do it ? It takes capital to create a farm, a garden, etc. Truly it does

if things remain as they are. Labor, before it could stir, in any direction, must free itself of the vain and unjust prejudice as if it meant anarchy. They must be represented in legislature directly, or, at least cast votes with any political party, the candidates of which will adopt *their* platforms. Reform the homestead laws, so as to enable a penniless honest man to acquire a certain number of acres of good land where he intends to settle. Those States that have available lands for this purpose, should also create a large enough fund to back bona-fide settlers, providing them with shelter, food, tools and all necessities to start in tilling the soil. No man will honestly file a demand for a homestead under the present conditions of affairs. Think of a man going out in the wilderness penniless, helpless, homeless to create a home, commence a settlement! And, even if such enthusiasts are to be found, the State is at liberty to sell that very homestead which that poor devil brought to flourishing conditions, before his five years are up, when he could obtain a diploma or deed! What a legal outrage! It will not occur very often that a man with a thousand dollars in his pocket will file a claim for a homestead; such fortunate men invariably buy out a grocer, a restaurant, a butcher, a corner saloon, or some such thing and enter "business." A real poor man is as wretched on a homestead lot as if he were on Madison Square, and neither State nor society, neither municipality nor religion, neither God nor man will lend

him a friendly hand to lift him up if he fell. Southern States are clamorous about immigration, so are the western. They send illustrated pamphlets, circulars chanting hymns and glory to the public concerning their climates, wonderful products, etc., thinking that northern people will at once pack up pouches of gold and hurry to the blessed Canaan. How silly! If it is advantageous for the State to attract immigration and settlers, let the State *make it advantageous* for the settler to immigrate. What is the use to offer wild lands to poor men? Rich will not cultivate and settle it, immigrants are supposed to be penniless or nearly so. Those illustrated pamphlets are useless, they do not reach the poor who have no address at all, but who still might become a very useful and desirable settler. Raise a fund, add one thousand dollars' credit to 100 acres of homestead land and you will see in a very few years how many settlers will crowd the land-offices and how many new colonies will dot your silent deserts!

I often wonder that so many rich men die leaving their millions for "philanthropic" purposes, (meaning by it preachers, for missions) hospitals, colleges, etc., but I never heard of a patriotic millionaire yet who had thought of thus endowing the honest poor with homesteads. Each State ought to have such patriotic sons, wherever immigration and settling are desirable, like Florida, Alabama, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona and California. What a great benefit, a blessing would redound to the

human race, to the States as much as to the individual honest poor by such patriotic deeds! No religion, no preacher could ever bring about such a blessing from heaven and Holy Bible; it must come out of the *pocket* and safe, revelation is too evanescent.

No serious man can object to over-production; for farming, especially in the south, does not necessarily mean wheat. There is no over-production in silk, in honey, in tobacco, in sugarcane, in fiberous plants. In and around Alabama the soil may be fit for sugar-beet, as our sugar-industry is very far from being over-productive. Gardening, poultry, bees, dairy furnish always and everywhere marketable goods, besides feeding the families of the settlers themselves. Add to this the healthier, more satisfied, happier independent life, the fact of land-ownership, the self-reliance, the solid and established existence, the chances implied and warranted by property holding, imply a satisfactory improvement upon the condition of walking along the Bowery or begging from shop to shop, from house to house, for a "job."

An outlet of this kind would greatly reduce the number of idling laborers on one hand, would make happy others, would create thousands of new homes, happy families; would drain the overcrowded cities, relieve aid societies, reduce the number of customers of liquor-shops, reduce rent, reduce competition in wages and balance the demand for laborers. Employment were more steady, wages more reasonable,

while immigration itself were divided between settlers and laborers.

Municipal, as well as all other governments are to serve public interests; to promote the welfare of all, rich or poor. It were a blessing to organize *labor bureaus* with a chief official in the city hall and branch offices in each police precinct or electoral district at public expense. All unemployed persons, male and female, able and willing to enter some employment should be registered in the respective district or main-office according to their trades or occupation and kept there in evidence, domestic, or native laborers in one class, foreigners in another. Circulars should be issued to all lodging houses and hotels, cheap restaurants and all such places where these poor work-seekers are likely to be found, to make it the duty of all keepers of those places to direct every laborer to the nearest labor-office for registration. All private "labor bureaux," "employment offices" should be peremptorily shut and forbidden, for they are, —with few exceptions—swindling concerns, sucking out the last cent from these unfortunate individuals seeking employment. There are in New York city certain firms, in most cases irresponsible agencies, such as some sewing machine firms, several book-agencies, publishers and other smaller concerns, who insert misrepresenting advertisements in the daily papers, dishonestly claiming as if they were wishing to employ men at salaries, when they do not. These heartless and dishonest bandits

take a singular delight in disappointing, deceiving the unwary, causing them unnecessary expenses and loss of time by calling at their headquarters. Public morality must revolt against this infamous outrage upon the already embittered poor. Open dishonesty, open lies publicly advertised should certainly not be tolerated, and the authorities will and must break it down. Advertisers of this sort ought to be visited by detectives, reported to the mayor and arrested as a public nuisance. Laborers of every kind could spare advertising by being registered at a public office. It should be the duty of all citizens of each city, town or village to hire their help, from a private secretary down to a laborer, direct from the main or branch office of the local labor bureau. Corporations, contractors, institutions and all, no matter how high, should in all cases resort to the city hall personally or otherwise for all help of whatsoever sort or class from a preachership or engineership down to the humblest rank. An institution of this kind, "The Department of Public Employment" would bring about a world of good in all directions! The idea to appear in the mayor's office or before the Employment Commissioner would save many a drink; would keep laborers on their feet and sober senses. There were fewer burglars, thieves, and loafers then, for the police would ask every idler if he was a laborer seeking employment. We shall make a suggestion concerning tramps, loafers and notorious malefactors in its proper time and place, let us not confound them

with the honest poor. Wages were paid more punctually and more conscientiously; employers and their methods were a trifle more closely watched and controlled and the poor were more effectively protected against dishonest employers, while sharks of "help furnished" were simply wiped out of existence.

Even the financial side of the question is easily manageable. Every person thus employed would be but too willing to deliver up, say, five per cent. of his or her wages for several months or a year as, for instance, the "teachers' bureaux" practice it, and were likely a self-supporting institution without even public tax. Yet, there are other sources available, and the improvement thus inaugurated, would be a great saving in every direction. Many prisons, police courts, saloons, lodging houses would remain empty, society cleansed and purified, misery helped, vice abated, families saved from dissipation and destruction, children from exposure and desertion. Labor organizations would spontaneously disband, dangerous riots, strikes cease, destruction of property, bloodshed prevented.

Could all this be realized? Why not? Each and every municipality can realize it, and if the States did as we suggested, it were the death-knell of labor question. Peace, harmony, contentment, happiness would soon follow; the country would grow more prosperous, the *uneconomical* wage system were superseded by the partner-system, more fruitful for all concerned, and no country on earth would be

happier than the United States of America. And all this can be realized without riot, without revolution, without bombs and gallows, all can be realized not only without expense but at a positive gain financially speaking; all this can be realized even without Bible and prohibition.

But what can religion suggest? The Catholic points at the "*montes pietatis*" (pawn shops), at any rate, something in temporary trouble even for the rich; but hypocritical preacherdom and monopoly only shows a demon-like grim face, lips blue with greed and avarice, whispering into your ears the devilish sneer: ch-a-r-i-t-y.

CHAPTER VIII.

WHAT is more paradoxical than the silently acknowledged and never repudiated fact that in the plain daylight of reason men and women are still divided into classes and castes according to what they are supposed to believe or not believe. How can that be still tolerated and borne, when the very heart of this anomaly is devoid of the least particle of truth and justice? How can our society bear it when it is an open contradiction, an avowed, and admitted untruth, conflicting with our daily and hourly practice, repudiated by our actions, rejected by practical life, by statistics, penal codes, by all material and moral evidences within the reach of man? Society is torn and dilacerated into rags and shreds not by *opinion*, for there are scarcely ten in ten thousand who have *opinions*, but by blind, brutal prejudice, emanating from an old, obsolete tradition so often deplored by honest men. Were it not for the language, a natural tie between people of the same origin; were it not for material interests by which nations and political unities are formed; were it not for seeking of gain and safety by which governments, laws and constitutions are created; that ancient curse of theological superstition, religious hatred, separatism and rage of intolerance would to-day rend

the mightiest society and drag it down remorselessly to cannibalism. Who knows but some savages may owe their degradation to theology? Nor is this an altogether impossible supposition if we bear in mind human sacrifices as practiced by Jews and other eastern nations.

Is it, then, religion and "faith" that this nation requires in order to have peace, material progress, contentment and happiness? Is it religion that brings industry, sobriety, law-abiding loyalty, integrity, patriotism, industrial and agricultural prosperity? Is it religion that Congress, Senate, Assembly, Supreme Court, municipal legislature, criminals, commercial, maritime, international laws and legislation are after? Is it religion that judges of criminal courts investigate in a law violating citizen? Does the judge take the catechism and the Holy Bible to examine the "faith" of a culprit? Will the judge be satisfied with the declaration of the culprit that he is "Protestant," that he believes in the Holy Trinity, in Rabbi Yeshúa, son of God; that he believes that faith alone justifies; that he believes sincerely that the Holy Bible is the revealed word of God? Or, on the other hand, can a judge sentence to death a law-abiding, honest, industrious, sober, faithful citizen for not believing in a "supreme being," in the Holy Trinity, in Rabbi Yeshúa's divinity, in revelation, in the Holy Bible, in the Lord's supper, in the hereafter and because he does not pay pew-rent?

Would religious people be satisfied if the morning papers should report some day, that Police Justice X or V took a catechism and examined the batch of prisoners, the crop of one night, consisting of staggering drunkards, ragged burglars, unwashed thieves and a few "young ladies," and upon finding that they, one and all, firmly believed in the Apostolic symbol, they were all practical Catholics and Protestants, that they all went to the holy communion, discharged them duly, in Christian manner? We do not think that this same Christian society were satisfied with this sort of investigation. Yet, Protestants ought to be satisfied, the Presbyterians in particular. Their theory is this: God is eternal. His intelligence and will consequently are also eternal. Whatever he intends and wills, he intends and wills it from all eternity. Nothing can happen against his will, for his will is an eternal decree. God knows what man will be born, and it is God's will that he should be born. God also knows the destiny of each man, and this destiny is willed and decreed by God from all eternity; for divine will is unchangeable, cannot be influenced by man, nor by the actions of man. Hence the destiny of man is either salvation after death, or condemnation to hell, destined, willed so from all eternity, regardless what the actions of man are. He may be a thief, an adulterer or murderer and still may be destined for salvation, or he also may be an exemplary, virtuous man and yet may be predes-

tined to hell. Thus human actions are indifferent. One, firmly believing that Rabbi Yeshúa was the son of God, that he died in atonement for the sins of the human race, can be reasonably certain that he is among the elect, for he is born in this new divine economy, otherwise he might have been born three thousand years ago, or in some part of the world where Calvinism or Presbyterianism is wholly unknown.

Now, with such a religion, certainly, nothing else is required than "faith" and if the police justice examined the burglar in a Presbyterian catechism, and the burglar did believe, why, he is all right, and the Christian community has no reason to complain. Man's actions are indifferent; he is predestined to be saved and be happy with God, no matter what he commits upon this earth, and to punish such a man is a blasphemy and insult upon God. Do not all clergymen demonstrate this conviction of theirs, when they accompany the condemned criminal to the gallows, and if the prisoner repents, they declare God satisfied, and strive to convince people that the broken down murderer became a saint? Some sects go so far as to claim that man is not even capable of performing a meritorious act, and that the good which sinners do are evil acts. The Catholic Church herself commits an analogous folly, teaching, that no man can perform a meritorious act toward salvation without what she calls "*gratia perveniens*," or "*antecedens*;" that is, God must grant a moving

or prompting grace for a sinner, before his good acts could be reckoned as such. Again, all Christians agree that no man can believe without the same prompting grace; how, then, should or could a "sinner" either believe or accomplish meritorious acts? Notwithstanding this theological *gallimatias*, the Catholic Church denies salvation to any one not doing good; belief is not sufficient to obtain salvation; the candidate or postulant for salvation must profess and practice all virtues, and perform as many good deeds as one is capable of. This stands to reason, and is beneficent to society. Still we must insist that the religious community has no right to clamor for the punishment of the malefactor; for a Protestant is not obliged by conscience to do good in order to be "saved;" he performs all his religious duties if he believes and has the faith. The Catholic cannot be positive whether he does or does not possess that particular divine grace of doing good. Why, then, should a religionist be punished?

All these considerations simply tend to show how religions are unfit to create, to conserve, maintain and elevate a society and a political state. Religion is a dead, insensate tradition, entirely devoid of those essentials that coöperate to build up an organized political, especially a modern, state. In truth, religions do not dare claim this much; they only pretend to guide the citizens of all countries to the "here-after." But if this is all they pretend, why should preachers, bishops and popes exert their supreme

efforts to influence politics, legislature and the duties of all individual citizens in all states and countries? On the other hand, why should the states and governments thrust "Holy Bible" into court-rooms, make pray senators and legislators, try to enforce "Lord's day" observances? Is a civil government a synod or a mission? Should a civil state care for "salvation of the soul"? Are our criminal, banking, exchange, etc., laws for the salvation of the soul?

No.

The civil state has another, much higher aim, the salvation of the *body* not beyond the grave, in the "hereafter," but on this side of the grave, in the *here* and now. State and Church, however, touch upon a certain point easily confounded, and not distinguishable by an average observer. We have laws, we do not enforce belief in the Holy Bible and catechism, we do punish criminals not for lack of belief or religion, but for the *wrong* they do. Now here is the line of demarkation, where State and Church almost touch.

What is wrong?

Wrong is what is not right.

What is right?

Right is what by social conventionality is universally acknowledged as just.

What is just by social agreement?

Just by social agreement is *equal measure to all*. According to this we all agree in the society to treat every being with equal measures, deal with all

beings upon equal measures, to give every being its dues. To do this is our professed and self-imposed duty. The habit and principle of doing our duty towards all beings, be they men or their properties and belongings, is called *morality*. A dutiful man is a moral man, a wrong doer is an immoral man. Both State and Church urge morality; so far they travel together on the same track; but now comes the switch where they part. It is, however, precisely here where confusion arises and State and preacher transgress and prevaricate over their respective tracks.

Religious morality divides duties into three classes or directions, namely: *a*, duties towards God; *b*, duties towards man; and *c*, duties towards self.

The State or civil society knows of only one class of duties, viz. towards man. Civil government transgresses its sphere and jurisdiction when it grows anxious about "Lord's days," "Holy Bible" in the court-room to take an oath upon it, and when it insists that Congress and Assembly should pray; for it is not the civil government's business to teach us our duties towards God, nor our duties towards ourselves. It cannot be zealous about our salvation, about our clothing, our meals, when we should go to bed, nor is it its sphere to see whether we believe, pray, keep fasting days, "Lord's days," go to Sunday-school or not. As to suicide, self-sale into slavery, vowed celibacy and the like, the State or civil society has a perfect right to interfere; for, a suicider, etc., is not only a separate and free individ-

ual, but also a citizen of a State and member of a society, and by acts above specified, he destroys a citizen, sells a citizen and robs a citizen from the freedom to marry. Society is even duty-bound that no such crimes and abuses should creep in and impair, threaten and endanger social safety and social virtue.

Social or civil morality differs from religious morality in scope, motive and character. The scope of the former is material and earthly peace, and material and earthly happiness, therefore palpable, intelligible and gladly complied with. The scope of the latter is a problematic "hereafter" of which nobody knows anything, therefore inefficacious, not one in fifty thousand considering it seriously. More religious individuals respect morality for civil reasons and for civil scope than for supernatural.

The motive of civil morality is wisdom; the motive of religious morality is "love and fear of God."

What is wisdom? The generally accepted definition of wisdom is the well-known one: Use of best means for attaining the best ends. Any man can be wise even the most ignorant; for, wisdom does not mean learning, but partly natural sagacity to see at a glance what is right and good, partly an acquired habit by learning, good practical experience in life. A wise man needs no laws, no more than an early riser by habit needs an alarm clock. A wise man needs no fence, no iron bars, safes, bolts, keys. Wise men need no religion, God, hereafter, hell and preacher; wise men need no lawyers, courts, police,

prison, gibbet and heavenly glory. Wise men need no drunkards' pledges, no prohibition. A wise man is not carried away with passion, needs no revolver, no war; he is not enthusiastic with success, not despondent with deepest misery. The wise is wise when millionaire, and wise when poor. The wise does good, not because of the law, he needs none, but because he knows that it is right and therefore his duty. The wise will not steal, deceive, adulterate articles, take advantage of somebody; the wise will not commit arson, murder, adultery, not because of hanging, electricity, death, fear, God, hell; but because it is unjust against fellow beings. The wise will not pray and implore Providence for safety, prosperity, luck, rain, fair weather, blessing, he knows that things come as they do, he cannot help it; nor will he, in consequence, curse and imprecate the same Providence for storm, hail, damage, flood, rain, accident, for he knows that everything happens naturally, by natural causes, where no prayers, no maledictions are any good. So the wise is wise for wisdom's sake, he is moral for morality's sake, dutiful for duty's sake, and therefore he is wise.

The motive of religious morality is "love of God" and "fear of God."

No man knows anything about God; no man knows a word about his existence, hence many men do not believe in a "supreme being" at all; nor is there any reason why they should. It is absolutely certain that nobody *loves* God, no matter

what preachers may say. Love is an affair of blood and flesh. Love is an affection, prompted by our senses, and not a jot of supernatural is about it. We cannot *love* abstract things, we can long for them providing our senses can suggest some idea of them to our brain. Thus we can love *something* beautiful, *something* sweet, *something* soft, *something* fragrant, etc., but it is very hard to love *beauty*, *sweetness*, *softness* or *fragrancy* nor hardly can we long after the same. Now, we have not the remotest idea of God, nor even of spirit, how could we even long for an unimaginable abstract conception or thought? Those cranks, who imagine that they *love* God, are preys to hallucination, seeing in their over-stretched fancy the image of a grey-bearded autocrat sitting upon the clouds. No rational Christian, but the insensate preacher only will say that he "loves" God.

Love of God, hope of salvation, heaven, fear of God, fear of hell are ineffective, inefficacious motives for morality, proved superabundantly by daily experience.

Whatever morality there is, is the result of wisdom on one hand, and of the laws, enacted by the wise for the unwise, on the other. Civil morality therefore is the only morality. Colonel Robert G. Ingersoll puts it in his well-known manner: "Good breeding is worth more than universal brotherly love."

In respect of character civil morality infinitely differs from religious morality. The latter seeks to

affect the heart of its subjects, appealing to their feelings, telling them about persons, lands, happenings in the fabulous past in a country scarcely known to anybody; telling them of books, written in a strange, dead, forgotten language by unknown, not worth to be known, obscure slaves, who had no country, no homes, and when they did have, knew not how to govern; they tell stories about people now dead for thousands of years, whom nobody knew, whose very existence is highly doubtful, and altogether unimportant, how these persons preached, chased the devils, suspended and defied the laws of nature, yet, did not teach how to hold a hatchet, how to make a living, how to build a home. Preachers, then, full of ecstasy and hypocritical enthusiasm, point to these fabulous persons, urge, solicit and coax us to try to become like one of them. With crocodile tears in their eyes they tell us all about the love, the suffering, the pitiful death of those fictitious heroes, as if no other men ever loved, ever suffered, ever died for a cause, and as if it had any moral force to change people's habits and daily ways and doings! Subjects of this system of morality are taught how to prepare for death, how to die, and all about things that will take place when they are dead and gone, of which no one knows anything. Subjects not zealous to emulate the model, after death go to hell, the zealous go to "heaven," things unknown to any being, and in fact, mere scare-crows, created by ignorance. In this respect,

no matter what preachers tattle, the Roman Church is again more prudent, more reasonable and more sober than preacherdom. It is true Rome knows no more about heaven and hell than the preacher, yet, since talk is cheap, and heaven does not cost more than hell; why should the Roman Church be blamed for her "purgatory" so vehemently denounced by preachers? It is certainly more sensible to teach that God is merciful and gives man a last chance, after a severe lesson in pitch-fire, to escape eternal damnation, than the preacher mania of a straight hell. Just think of a God never appearing, never showing himself, never manifesting his will, while after the death of an insignificant worm, like man, the creator and preserver of this universe, an *uncorporeal, omnipresent* being bounces down upon that naught, that vile nothing, called a dead man, and appears to it the first and last time and only for that vile nothing's eternal damnation! Is it not a blasphemous hide-and-seek play attributed to God, a most sacred being?

The character of civil morality is a practical and material one. It does not appeal to imagination; it does not produce a model from the waste-basket of history and archeology, but defines the duties of the subjects for all particular cases and conditions. It appeals to a citizen's reason and judgment, to see for himself the good or evil character of an action. It does not busy itself with the after death, with the salvation of the soul, but with the well-being, peace,

comfort and happiness of the body in this earthly life, the only one of which we are conscious and positive. It does not consider whether a principle or an action is revealed in the Holy Bible, or if it was ever called good or evil in antiquity, but whether it is just and right here and now. Nor does it quote the Holy Bible to support a statement or law-axiom, nor does it quote St. Augustine, St. Ambrose, or St. Paul, but reason and daily experience. It does not urge belief in the mystery of the Holy Trinity, but teaches man how to reckon, how to read and write; urges man to learn a trade, to earn an honest living, found a home, marry, and be an upright, useful citizen. Whatever civil morality teaches, it also means it, and sees to it that civil or public morality be respected and practiced. True, the Catholic Church has also a code of practical laws the "Canon Law," but it is not applicable to civil society, especially in modern times, while Protestantism has none, for it cannot have a code of morality, faith and salvation excluding good works. Civil, police and criminal courts are in session almost continually and it is their business to see that right, justice and peace are respected and kept. All cases, all complaints and wrongs are discussed not by annointed supernatural men, but by common experts in law and common, but reliable citizens with good, common sense. The defendant is allowed a perfect freedom, no rack, no thumb-screws, no "God's judgment" by fire or red-

hot iron are employed ; he is welcome to explain his case, or get it explained by a skilled jurist. In case of a verdict of guilty, he is again welcome to appeal to a higher court for a re-examination of his case, and he is allowed ample time to procure all evidence and witnesses at his command and disposal.

The administration of our public justice, however advanced, is still a human work, and is in the hands of men. Men are not infallible. The best man is liable to mistakes and frailties however good his intentions and purposes may be. Prejudice is like a demon in Christian mythology, always alert, always hovering around all of us. We imbibe prejudice unnoticed, it sticks to us like a smell, by contact with prejudiced people. Our own parents, relatives, friends, teachers, above all the preacher, all infect us with the contagion of prejudice, of which religion is the hot-bed and nursery. Wisdom is a rare gift, and even those, who are most favored by this only divine spirit, a real holy ghost, may at times miss it. Religious and newspaper prejudice however is by far the most dangerous enemy of real justice, and hence our public justice is yet very far from being what it might and ought to be.

In the first place, the administration of justice is too expensive for the poor, and altogether unaccessible to the penniless. For this obstacle many flagrant wrongs are daily perpetrated against the penniless, rights suppressed, dues denied, wrongs passed over, injustice never avenged for want of means to seek

redress. How many poor beings shed tears over their unjust robbery. Oppression, cheat and fraud, never to come to light, for it costs money to appeal to a court. Lawyers will not listen to a penniless individual; their fees are the first thing they look after, and then begins the red-tape, all to be conquered, oiled and greased with cold cash. Judges, lawyers and even their subalterns treat the penniless with scorn, contempt and ridicule, while they bend their dorsal spine before the rich culprit. Could Americans not remedy this unseemly and very discreditable evil in some appropriate way?

Another equally sad misery of American legislature and the administration of public justice is the confusion of ideas concerning equity, punishment and vengeance, severity and retaliation, benevolent leniency and sentimental partiality. Judges and juries, fair minded otherwise, yield to popular prejudice, and become victims to cannibalistic rage, foaming with madness against the penniless criminal in their hands, and clamor for his blood like maniacs, perfectly losing human feelings. Sad enough that murders are committed even in our century, but do our legislators, judges and jurists think of the sources of this savagery? Are they perfectly familiar with all psychological motives? Do they try to stop the sources?

Here we arrive at a point, where, with a great reluctance, but with the courage of our convictions and an invincible instinct of fairness and justice, we must step across the path of English Protestant fana-

ticism, to appeal to reason, to plead for justice against hypocrisy and flagrant violation of all known principles of justice.

The English speaking nations boast with great vanity of their particular chivalry, their gallant championship of the female sex. This is as untrue as it is silly. No doubt, English tourists' books, magazines and papers teem with sham-indignation, hypocritical denunciations of those European nations where the females are seen to work on the field ploughing, hoeing, digging and otherwise engaged in rude, hard toil. How barbarous!—how disgusting!—how shocking! True, among English people, at any rate, on this side of the ocean, we do not witness that "cruelty." But compare a field-working, buxom, brawny female with our emaciated, pale, ghostly shop and factory girls as they appear in crowded street cars, and elevated trains! Farming Yankees know the difference, and *appreciate* the difference, when letters are poured down upon the Castle Garden authorities to *secure wives* for these same farmers from among those "barbarously treated" European female immigrants.

Women are not always the weaker.

All the world talks of ruined women, but I never heard people talk of ruined men. Yet, I dare say, that there are more men ruined by women than the reverse. "*Cherchez la femme!*" say the French, if you are after a clue. Find the woman in the case! We are constantly told that the

female is physically the weaker. This is a slight upon woman. Woman may lack physical strength, for want of exercise and idleness; in nature however, the female is almost always as strong as the male, in many classes of animals the female is the strongest. If all women were placed upon one arm of a scale and all males upon the other, I do not think that the males were so sure of tipping over the scale to their side. Her hand is in religion, in politics, in science, in art, in literature, everywhere displaying the very same character, and man, for mere prudential considerations, yields.

A modest woman is the ideal of all men, the ambition and reward of honest men; she is the idol and sanctuary of a noble man, is the goddess toward whom we turn with love and reverence; a noble and modest woman is like a flower hidden in the depth of a virgin forest, out of the way of rambling cattle, still easily found at the sacred bosom of nature, be she an heiress to millions, be she a Cinderella. Her virtue is not tempted, she is an altar to which we approach with a divine awe.

The feminine sex is a more deplorable victim of religious fanaticism than the masculine. The Roman Church calumniates her, oppresses her, vilifies her in the most absurd and wanton manner, while preacherdom demoralizes her in the opposite direction by undue hymns, praises, encouragement and flattery to win her for the chapel and pew.

CHAPTER IX.

IS it not a charming sight in a farm yard to see a solicitous old duck surrounded by her chirping little ducklings picking grains of whatever substance may have been scattered on the ground for them? Every now and then the whole little gay family would leave the spot, run to the nearest pond or vessel to "have a drink," and return again to their repast. The grains picked, down they trip to the creek, plunge and roll into it, head first, not particular in finding a gentle slope. What a happy little thing that plucky dwarf of a duckling is! How gracefully he bends and stretches out his tender feet as seen in the clear water, swimming, turning right and left, performing clever summersaults. Well enough if their mother is not a mere nurse of theirs; but what a tantalizing sight when they have a "mamma" in an old duck unable to follow them down into the liquid, but remains cackling and hopping to and fro on the shore!

Who taught these wicked little things to plunge into the water as soon as they shook off the egg-shell? Poor old mother duck crazily jealous for them, while the malicious pigmies desert their mother so ungratefully.

What thoughts must spontaneously arise in a contemplative mind upon observing nature's economy as manifested in the animal kingdom? The further we progress in experience the more we become convinced that animals, after all, are not mere mechanical automatons destitute of all reason and judgment, feelings analogous to ours, feelings of love, compassion, sorrow, parental, conjugal, that link animals together in an imperfect yet perceptible society of families and tribes. Vain and false is the praise and admiration so lavishly bestowed upon human mind, and the bold conclusion that it is something "supernatural" and immortal for the simple reason that it is capable of judgment, that it reflects impressions of the past, forms thoughts and—seldom verified—views and opinions aiming at the future. Human reason is in just proportion with our bodily or material development. We invent contrivances to aid our physical powers, to traverse distance, to draw near far off objects, magnify things imperceptible to our unaided eyes, and many such other things that help us render things advantageous, serviceable to promote our comfort, render life more easy and existence more happy. Beyond that, human reason does not reach, will not reach, nor is it any necessity that it should.

Yes, animals have sufficient judgment; animals have families, are conscious of certain obligations; animals have sentiments and tender hearts. That little mouse your wife caught in the trap was after food; perhaps she was a mother nursing her little

ones; perhaps a father seeking food for his family with a tender devotion towards those who were anxiously looking for his return and you destroyed his life unscrupulously, thoughtlessly, selfishly.

Those animals in the Central Park are collected and exhibited for the instruction of the multitude. Do they get instructed? Do these multitudes elicit any thoughts concerning those beings? Do they consider that those beings are imprisoned; that they are snatched away from distant, far off countries, brought over here under an uncongenial climate? Do they consider that these poor animals are short lived in spite of all care and attention they receive at the hands of their keepers? Do they ever think that every one of the beasts have left a cherished spot on earth, a family bemoaning their losses, be they their companions or be they their parents or their young ones? Their untimely death may not be due so much to climate as to an unutterable grief.

Wise men have repeatedly said that nature was a large book of revelation, and I add for my part, that it is also the most perfect book and code of laws of practical morality, requiring no pulpits, no prophets, interpreters, preachers and organizations to enslave the human race. Man denies reason to animals to exalt his own, denies merit and virtue, to recommend his own. We do not claim that animals meditate upon morality or canon law, but we claim that they could be more wicked than they are, that they sometimes show good will and good inclinations where men do

not; and we also claim that in matter of bad will, malice and immorality men surpass savage beasts.

As art is more perfect the closer it resembles and reproduces nature, so is man more moral, morally better the nearer he draws to nature, the more he knows of nature, and the more time he spends at the bosom of nature. Our rural citizens are undoubtedly far better in morality than the effeminate throngs of our crowded cities. Compare the primitive Indians with the intruding Catholic Spaniards in point of morality and humanity. The advantage is not always on the side of the latter.

Modern science has but one source for promoting civilization: Mother nature.

There is no science, there never was science, there never will be science, but mother nature.

There is no wealth, there are no riches but from one source, the bosom of mother nature.

There is no art, there is no object for art, there is no source for art, but mother nature.

There is no beauty, there is no sublime, there is no inspiration but in, and by mother nature.

There is no truth, there is no evidence, there is no righteousness but in mother nature.

There is no argument, no proofs, no justice, no conclusions but inductive from mother nature.

There is no philosophy, there is no wisdom, nor any object for it but within mother nature.

There is no goodness, there is no impulse for goodness, nor reason for it but in mother nature.

There is no morality in theory, nor any in practice, nor motives for it but suggested by mother nature.

There is no revelation, nor anything to be revealed, nor even conceivable but within mother nature.

There is no religion, nor anything believable, nor worth believing except in accordance with mother nature.

There is no existence, there is no being possible, much less necessary, outside of mother nature.

Wise men in all ages knew this, and modern thought, ever since Francis Bacon, is turned in the direction of nature. Man discovered many laws of nature, and we owe every blessing, existence itself, all knowledge, all wealth, wisdom, philosophy, reasoning, the idea of justice, nowadays also the idea of goodness and morality, righteousness and virtue to the knowledge of natural laws. Therefore: whatever is nature, is good, honest, true and beautiful; whatever is not natural is wrong, untrue and ugly. Whatever is not natural is unnatural. To claim that there can be things not within nature is a confessed insanity, confounding *earth* with *nature*. Supernatural is super-reason and super-reason is lunacy. The origin of supernaturalism dates back to the infancy of mankind, when reason was undeveloped, when no natural laws were known, no discoveries made; supernaturalism consequently is due to ignorance and is fed and nurtured by ignorance, maintained only by unargumentative, unprogressive stub-

bornness, withered and mouldy prejudices, hypocritical, unsincere spirit of contradiction, lack of information, and above all, by the turpitude of factional aggrandizement and lucre. When we urge morality we demand palpable realities. Society is a palpable reality ; food, clothing, shelter are realities. Punishment, suffering, death, vices, crimes are realities. Nature furnishes us with realities : health, strength, eating, drinking are realities accompanied by laws of nature, which if violated, draw on their own punishment, as a body carries with itself its own shadow. Eat too much, drink too much, enjoy too much, walk, work, talk, sit, sleep too much : you draw upon yourself nature's just punishment. Here is the palpable, real code of morality revealed not in Hebrew or Greek books, but in realities of life. Sin, crime, vice are negative ; they are an absence, lack of good, as is darkness the lack of light. Nature does not punish eating, drinking, study, work, etc., they are naturally moral actions ; but nature punishes *excess*. Excess is what we call sin or crime. Wisdom, based upon experience prevents us from rushing into excess, and drawing nature's punishment upon ourselves.

Murder is a crime. Life is the greatest good in nature's gift, and nature does not withdraw life from its creatures except by punishing an excess, or by accident, but lets life bloom to its own lawful end. Gifts of nature cannot be taken away from us by man without usurping the authority of nature. It is inter-

fering with nature's laws, and acting contrary to these laws. Mutilation, enforced celibacy, tyranny, arbitrary limitation of human freedom, theft, robbery, "legal" murder, all come under these same natural laws and their violation.

But man is bound to live in society by the tacit laws of nature; not for the glory of God and the redemption of the "soul," but for the mere reason of subsistence. We cannot answer the question, "When did men form society?" for this question is analogous to the inquiry "When did eternity commence?" However, it is certain that the first human beings were born in society. Remember the ducklings! We asked "Who taught them to swim?" Nature denied us natural weapons, sharp instincts, sharp senses like it so lavishly bestowed upon all animals and gave nothing in compensation, except a faculty, that was to develop into reason. Nothing can be a more evident inference from this consideration than that man is a product of natural selection, like cultivated flowers from simple, wild ones. While that duckling is ready to swim as soon as it has the strength, an infant left exposed in the wilderness is completely helpless and must perish in consequence. An infant has neither strength, nor weapon nor yet reason; if a beast took care of it, it never would acquire speech and reason, but it would acquire claws, hair upon the whole body for protection, and bodily strength far in excess of that of any ordinary man. We developed into a special, or exceptional species,

for we can propagate ourselves in our own species. Human nature abhors trials in this particular branch of investigation, but, if I am not mistaken, accidents prove what intentional trials, being unattempted, could not prove. A retrogradation to bestiality, is possible, advancement to humanity is still more natural. The first man was the result of such an advancement, and must have been born in society, or he would not exist. In its primitive condition, developing humanity could have had no laws beyond what nature enforced; murders, theft and other crimes were no crimes; for a violation presupposes a law. Experience taught man the necessity of conventional laws such as we have to-day in a highly developed status; and these international conventionalities are as authoritative laws as those suggested by nature. But all these are natural, we ourselves are natural, and we obey natural laws more readily than fictitious ones, because our mind cannot but acquiesce in a unappealable law of nature. This law is palpable, supported by self-evident motives, simply it is natural, therefore true, just, right, good and beautiful.

The further we advance, the more enlightened we are; the more we know, the nearer we approach nature. The reverse is also true: the further people depart from nature the more ignorant, the more barbarous and poor they become. When we all know nature, we shall all observe its laws, we shall all take nature's economy and morality for our code of moral-

ity; we shall eliminate brutality, drunkenness, heartlessness, murder, theft, usury, deceit, selfishness, hypocrisy and all vices, excesses, violations, sins and crimes. We shall not slaughter men; we shall know our duties towards one another, seek no reward for virtue, and not incur punishment for excess.

We are, as yet, very far from that blessed day when wisdom will guide all minds; ignorance and recklessness is yet too great. We need laws, people are yet blind to see the worth of virtue. The majority of people still need promises and threats, strangling to death, damnation to hell, exaltation to heaven, blessing of God, menacing figure of the devil, and all other good and evil means to urge morality and keep brutally ignorant masses out of the way of vice and crime. When but few were wise, a system of morality developed, the motives of which were invisible undemonstrable authority, as when we threaten our children, if naughty, with a bugaboo. No matter; let us use all, even silly means, to make man good. With a silly man a silly argument may be worth more than the best philosophy; use what you can, but try to make man good, but by good means, fair methods and good example above all. To-day, however, we have progressed; there are very many wise men in the world; these wise people discovered that those old methods are not honest, not truthful, and what is worst of all, silly people take for reality what is but a method.

Morality however, albeit a great good in itself, is not, and cannot be regarded as an end and aim by itself. It is nothing more than a guaranty of peace, a bridle against injustice, and an assurance of harmony amongst the citizens of a commonwealth and among nations and countries of the world. Morality was ever, and is still over-estimated and abused by Church and civil society alike. They all preach morality and all violate justice and equity. The churches have done their best to move people to morality in their well known fashion, claiming nothing more than the salvation of the soul, still they burnt and murdered those who did not care to save their own souls. But at the same time, these moralists destroyed those same "souls" and have cast them down to hell into eternal *punishment*. Where is the morality in this action? They punish, and their God punishes, and civil society punishes; who does the rewarding? Does the Church reward morality and virtue? Does civil society reward morality and virtue? Who does it? God.—

No; morality is no aim but a means, instrumental-ity for peace; the aim is happiness. If society demands morality and virtue in order that it might be happy, justice demands that it should reward the promoters, reward them with happiness. Punishment without reward is unjust, one sided, tyrannical.

How many honest hearts are returning to dust in the "Potter's field" who never tasted the honey of

happiness! How many honest, upright, irreproachable poor toilers lose their lives year after year in honest labor, stainless characters, standard integrity, whose lives were models of morality, and yet, never knew anything else but misery, pangs and worry till kind death took pity of them? How many noble souls wear their hands off in opening and closing shop and house doors in search after work, never declining from the path of virtue and duty, who could be made happy easily enough, yet, neither preacher nor magistrate are in haste to minister him that easy happiness? Were there a reward to virtue and morality, our earth could be a paradise long since.

As we said, this world is material, food and shelter are material; suffering from want is material; practical morality, honesty and virtue are material; they all are in this world; life is in this world; punishment is in this world; happiness and remuneration of morality and virtue must be in this world; remuneration and reward must be material; the alleviation of misery, the relief from sufferings must be material, or else there is no justice in this world, no right to demand morality from the cown trodden. It is a mockery, a heartless ridicule and a demon-like insult to justice, to virtue and to humanity itself to talk of reward to a sufferer, to be given him after he is dead! A wild beast would blush to insult an agonizer in this manner.

Be it far from me to find fault with everything

that churches, priests and preachers or other religionists may do. Be it far from me to suppose that there are no fair minded and well meaning people among religionists ; assuredly there are, and many well-to-do religionists are ever ready to do good in spite of "salvation by faith only ;" but in most cases they are at a loss to know just what to do, and thus their benevolence and well meant munificence is misdirected by preachers and bishops.

Let us acknowledge that the Catholic Church in her establishments in Europe entertains hundreds of poor students free of charge. I am aware that all fairly large monasteries, convents, seminaries, bishops, canons and other dignitaries of that church allow each so many poor students to visit their respective institutions and houses, palaces and residences for all meals they may want ; that they allow them financial aid and support ; that numerous poor families are fed by these establishments directly, and even food is sent to them. I also know that all monasteries have their kitchens open for the needy without question. I have been the head of a monastery for several years, and so my experience is personal and actual. We not only fed all poor coming to us without reference to religion ; we not only clothed the poor, not only gave temporary employment for all we possibly could, just to help them to a few dollars ; we not only aided financially embarrassed poor laborers, women whose husbands were sick or unemployed ; but helped many to employment, paid fares,

cancelled debts and obligations, sheltered the homeless; answered the letters of the needy with an enclosed check. We got in poor people, soldiers and others into homes of refuge; we sent back persons to Europe at our own expenses; we gave substantial help to persons toward establishing themselves in business, never asking a question as to religion and nationality. For us nobody was a "tramp" a "vagabond," all were *men* indiscriminately, and, within my memory, not one ever approached our door without relief, and never left it without thankfulness.

In the Catholic Church it is a reality that one hand knows not what good the other hand performs. Nor is there any nauseating drudgery, preaching-vexation connected with benefaction. Do good to the poor and you save him; help him to his feet, raise him from dejection and degradation; show him good will, interest in his distress, encourage him by substantial aid; introduce him to people who might need him, if he evidences his honesty, and you create a man. A substantial help to good men converts more people than a train-load of tracts, Bibles, Christian evidences, hymns, pamphlets, sermons and an army of preachers and missionaries. A five-dollar-bill given when asked by an evidently honest person, may save a whole family from destruction or from crime. Remember the saying of a monarch: "A nail may save a horseshoe; a horseshoe may save a horse; a horse may save a general; a general may save an army;

an army may save an emperor ; an emperor may save a country ! ”

Besides, the Catholic Church possesses an infinite number of institutions, that English call “charitable” in preacher phraseology, such as hospitals, homes, refuges, protectories, foundling asylums, insane asylums, etc., etc., of which I have my own opinion, but do not care to express it here and now. If they do good, if any human being is benefited by them, if they alleviate suffering, relieve misery without injury to others, without inflicting pain and suffering to others, without making others unhappy victims ; good, let them receive the reward they seek, let them be happy as they wish, after they are dead.

However, there are millions who are not sick, nor insane : my object is to consider the case of those poor and needy who could be helped to their feet and be enabled to help themselves and support their families. People who live from day to day, are more or less liable to sink below the level from which they could climb up unassisted by more fortunate human beings. These classes furnish very often the most successful men in life if started after a bitter struggle ; these classes furnish the paupers and beggars if they succumb for lack of humanity in their fellow citizens ; these classes furnish the victims of hard labor, the wrecks of honest toil ; this class furnish the inmates of all imaginable “charitable” institutions ; and finally these classes furnish the majority

of criminals, revolutionists, anarchists, communists and all other secret organizations, the ever increasing threat to society. Their case is certainly the worthiest of all cases in human society.

What did, and what do, churches accomplish for the furtherance of the interests of these lower classes, the bulk of all nations? The Church of Rome had some practical sense in the past to know that it was *bread* that the hungry needed, and not Bible; it was clothing, shelter, and above all, *means*. As the Church could not afford to distribute money among the millions, she invented the "*mons pietatis*," the original pawn-shop. It was well meant, and, to tell the truth, it has ever been a blessing to the poor, and it could be now under different conditions. No bread, no shelter, no fuel can be had but for cash. Where will I get it? I am no landlord, I am no banker, nor even a merchant; I could do some work, I am willing to do some work to earn wages, to get some cash; but I am not employed, I can not find a man who would pay for my services. I have been trying for these last twenty-four hours all over the city. I spent my last quarter for my lunch yesterday. I am hungry, I have not a cent, my room rent is due, I dare not show myself before my land-lady, I steal up to the third story in my little room just to sleep, all day I am on my feet. My clothes become shabby, shoes fall off my feet, still there is no man who would take me. I have seen better days, I am well bred, I used to live comfortably. I

have a gold watch, however, I have a valuable diamond breast-pin and a gold ring. There are some fine pieces of clothing which I saved. I wish I had the money my father paid for this fine watch. Couldn't I raise money on it somewhere? Who knows? Yes, indeed; I remember people speak of pawn shops! But I am told that they are frequented by thieves only. Hm! well, no matter, I am no thief. I did not steal this watch, and if I get some money on it, why, I am helped. People feel ashamed at first, but the ice is broken soon by the pressing misery, and the pawn-shop remains a last hope for the drowning honest man before sinking into crime. I have no doubt but that pawn-shops may have saved more men from suicide or from crime than all the chapels in the universe.

The theory was that a small capital distributed promiscuously is certainly for no purpose, nor is donation worth anything, any more than alms. The church people thought that when a man is driven to ask for alms he is already demoralized, he cannot value money any longer, and a small amount of money would do him no good. But when a man is driven for a loan by need, and is willing and able to furnish some security such a man should have credit and cash upon security. The simplest security is acceptable among thoroughly honest men, such as clothes, tools, musical instruments, silver, gold, jewels, etc. This institution however, degenerated and became despised unjustly. Abuses are committed not only in pawn-

shops, (like the charge that thieves only patronize and frequent them), but with the most prominent banks, in any treasury, by thieves, counterfeiters, etc. Taking things as they should be, I see no reason for shame to make recourse to a pawn-shop, any more than to any other bank. What is a mortgage, what are securities, bonds and stocks, but one sort of pawn-shop tickets. The rich takes a mortgage on his house, on his mine, on his railroad; the poor takes a mortgage on his coat, on his watch, ring, weapons, or whatever he may possess. Where should the poor, friendless go if he or she is in pressing need for fifty cents or a dollar? To the national banks? to the Stock Exchange? to the treasury? where? Should poor people report to city mayors, police magistrates that they are now ready to steal or rob being at the end of their resources?

The pawn-shop is a Catholic Church institution for business purposes, a sort of bank for the poor, and in this respect an honorable, well-meant and useful establishment all denunciations of the preachers notwithstanding. What did the preacher establish thus far in the direction of helping poor downtrodden people in the way of financial aid?

The preacher created a word from the Latin dictionary in his own way. The Latin word is *charitas*, meaning *deariness* originally, and *love*, as when we say "my dear." The French changed it into *charité*, and the preacher adding one more twist, made of it *charity*, with an additional meaning, a hypocritical one, that the Latin word never had, *i. e.* alms.

Charity is the most hypocritical word in the English dictionary.

Hell itself—and this is to say a good deal—is not so full of greed, insatiable grudge, covetousness, envy, jealousy, avarice, selfishness, heartlessness, indifference towards the needy, as is this abstract and meaningless word *charity*.

In the way of practical help for the needy the preacher, thus far, has failed to find, and failed even to seek, any means whereby the condition of the working poor might be improved, or whereby the honest poor could be saved from destruction when temporarily embarrassed.

It is not “charity,” nor yet love, that is wanted; for love toward a stranger, toward a person in rags and filth, or even loaded with diamonds, is as impossible as it is ridiculous; humane feeling, sympathy, unselfishness, disinterestedness are the things wanted.

While at home the poor are attended in this manner, the preacher is extremely anxious to spread the blessings of his Christianity amongst the “unfortunate heathen.” They beg and beg eternally; they solicit subscriptions, donations of all kinds to “civilize” humanity abroad, in the “darkness of heathendom.” Societies are organized, offices, printing, publishing undertaken, all after money. Fully \$10,000,000, are spent *every year* toward the purpose of converting African savages, Asiatic barbarians, yet nobody *is* converted, but missionaries find good homes and salaries. Millions are squandered for

strangers, who do not care for their Bible, for their preaching and for their Christianity.

There are the Jesuits now preaching for the last 200 years, and they are certainly worth a ship load of preachers, every one of them, yet, who are Christians in Asia in Africa?—The Europeans. What must an intelligent Hindoo, Chinese, Japanese, Zulu, think of a foreigner, apparently an educated man, when he begins to talk about Trinity, of a soul that emigrates from the body upon death, and is to *see* God, who is present but invisible everywhere? What must a heathen think of a civilized man talking such stuff? He will, at once, lose all respect for civilization and progress, for he thinks that all white people believe that nonsense, and these “teachers” are sent to them as our own best and wisest men! Poor things, if they knew the truth! We are right here, 43,000,000 of us in the United States: let the preachers try to convert us Agnostics. Why go to China and Africa?

Christian Theology is a total wreck to-day, since mankind is developed. The most powerful conqueror is agnosticism. Agnosticism is in the atmosphere; we breathe it as naturally as we do air. It needs no missionaries, no preachers, no shrines. It gathers and gains its votaries from Catholics, Protestants, Jews, Mohammedans, Buddhists, Spiritualists, and all imaginable sects and religions. It finds adherents amongst Catholic and Protestant bishops, priests, preachers, rabbis; amongst Free Masons and Jesuits,

in one word, every where, where the light of reason penetrates.

Religion passed the meridian in the middle ages, it is advancing now downward to the horizon like the sun at five o'clock in the evening with the difference that it never will rise again. Nobody is sorry for it, save the preacher.

THE END.

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I am now *en route* to Washington and on my return to New York will arrange to take back with me a number of copies of "Judas Iscariot," and, if published, also a number of copies of "The Atheist Monk," if it is a desirable work.

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